First Book Bound in January of 2017

New Hobby

My progression of learning new hobbies has gone like this:

1965	Learned basic carpentry, framing, on the farm
1976-1978	Learned basic plumbing, electrical, HVAC, working summers at my Uncle's plumbing shop
1980	Started doing woodworking including lathe work. Taught by father-in-law Lloyd Wells
1997	Experimented with bookbinding. Made one perfect bound book using vise with wood liners
2011	Bought steam generator, but failed at steam bending wood
2015	Learned how to do intarsia from books
2016	took 15 classes at 3 hours each in 2016.....and learned how to do stained glass.
2016	Learned how to successfully steam bend white oak and Ash. Key is 1 week soak in water and Downy, also use bending clamp

I love paper books, and have always been fascinated with learning how to bind them. I decided that in late 2016 and early 2017 I would try to learn how to hand-bind books.

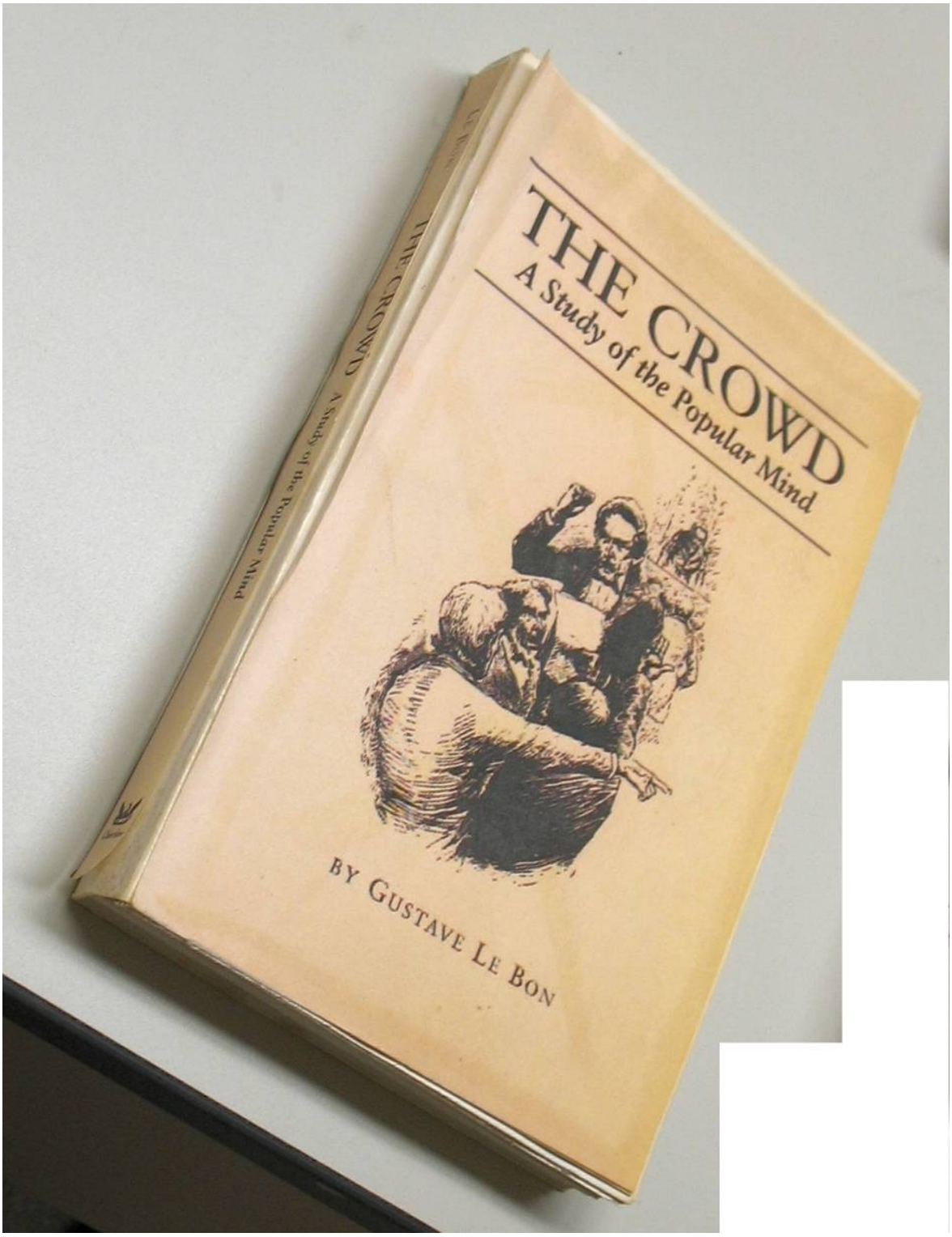
1997 Project

Back in 1997, I printed a book into signatures (I took 8 pages of 8.5x11 paper and folded them over). I don't remember what software I used to print the signatures, probably Lotus AmiPro.

I did not staple or sew the signatures. I clamped about 8 signatures into my vise, with a piece of pine on each vise jaw, then liberally applied Elmer's glue to the edge of the book. I think I made the cover from thin white cardboard paper, and also put it on the book when I glue the spine. I printed a front cover, back cover, and spine label, and glued them on.

This book looks crude, but it has held together with little usage, for almost twenty years. The glued on cover title has curled up over time.

I remember I could not figure out how to trim the edges, so I did not trim them.



Classes

I would like to take a bookbinding class, but none are offered in Central Illinois, that I know of.

Internet Sites

I found one site that offers good illustrations on hobby bookbinding. It is in the Instructable craft series.

The web address is....http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-bind-your-own-Hardback-Book/?ALLSTEPS

You can get to it using this link.

It was posted by Kaptin Scarlet. I think her illustrations are excellent. Her basic process is:

-Print up your 8-sheet signatures, fold in half
-staple each group of signatures
-squeeze all signatures together using heavy paperclips
-cut piece of fabric to glue onto the spine. Width = 5 times thickness of all signatures, center it. Height = height of pages
-glue on spine fabric using Elmer's glue or hot melt glue
-now you have the book pages as a sub-assembly. It is a rectangular block of paper with 2-wings (the spine fabric) sticking out on
two sides
-she leaves it optional to trim the edges of the pages. Her options for trimming include straight-edge and Exacto knive, or use a
heavy duty paper cutter, or hire it done at a print shop

-measure and cut the cover and back cardboard about 1/4" bigger than the pages. Also cut out the spline
-cut the cover material so it overlaps the cardboard by about 1"
-glue the cardboard front, back, and spline covers to the cloth material
-now fold over the 1" overlap and glue to inside of covers
-glue the rectangular block of pages to the covers on the 2 wings of fabric
-measure and cut the inside cover lining paper, and glue it on. The lining paper can be fancy marblized paper.

-THE END

YouTube Videos

These days, you can find a Youtube video on about every topic known to man!

Sure enough, there are several out there on Youtube. I like the multi-part series called..... ***Bookbinding Tutorial Part One - Making and Preparing the Signatures*** by Crafty Loops.

You can see it using this link.

Her process is similar to the web site noted above, but she sews in her signatures. I did not understand how to sew the signatures, until I watched her videos. She uses 1 mm thread, a special large needle, and a special awl to punch the holes in the signatures.

Summarizing her process:

-start with signatures
-make template with 4 sewing holes (they don't show on finished book, might be better to not have them on even increments for error-proofing
-place each signature on top of some foam
-place sewing hole template on inside of signature
-use small, thin awl, to poke holes through template into signature, and into foam. I think box cardboard would work also.
-cut 1st piece of thread to length. Use height of book and measure thread to give you the number of signatures + 1 for knots & ends
(8 signatures would be 8 signature heights + 1 more = 9 heights)
-she uses 2 horizontal ribbons and sews them into the signatures. These are sort of like the wings that Kaptin Scarlet uses in her
method.
-for sewing, she lays the signatures on top of an old book.
-leave 1.5" on the end you start sewing, then sew down the signature
-when you get down to the end, then lay on 2nd signature, and put needle through aligning hole on 2nd signature
-when you get back to where you started, make square knot using 1.5" tail that you left when you started
-insert ribbons. On 4 holes, you have 1 ribbon, on 5 holes, you have 2 ribbons
-keep sewing on the signatures
-after 3 signatures, do special knot on each end to previous signatures
-glues ribbon down on both sides. Ribbon is about 1" long for gluing. Use plastic c-clamps to clamp it.
-apply Elmer's glue to spine, let soak in
-cut piece of card stock equal to thickness of compressed signature stack
-apply glue to card stock, then put card stock onto spline before spline glue dries
-use plastic c-clamps with paper spacer to compress book below the spine

-no trimming of glued up signatures is done by her. If you trim, you have to do it before you make the cardboard covers so they are the right size
-cut front cover, back cover, and spline. Cardboard cover should be about 1/4" bigger than book size
-glue 3 cover pieces onto paper, which will be outside of book (she used paper, not cloth)
-fold cover pieces over into the inside of the book, and glue up

-she does cut 45 degree angles at the corners
-let dry at least one hour

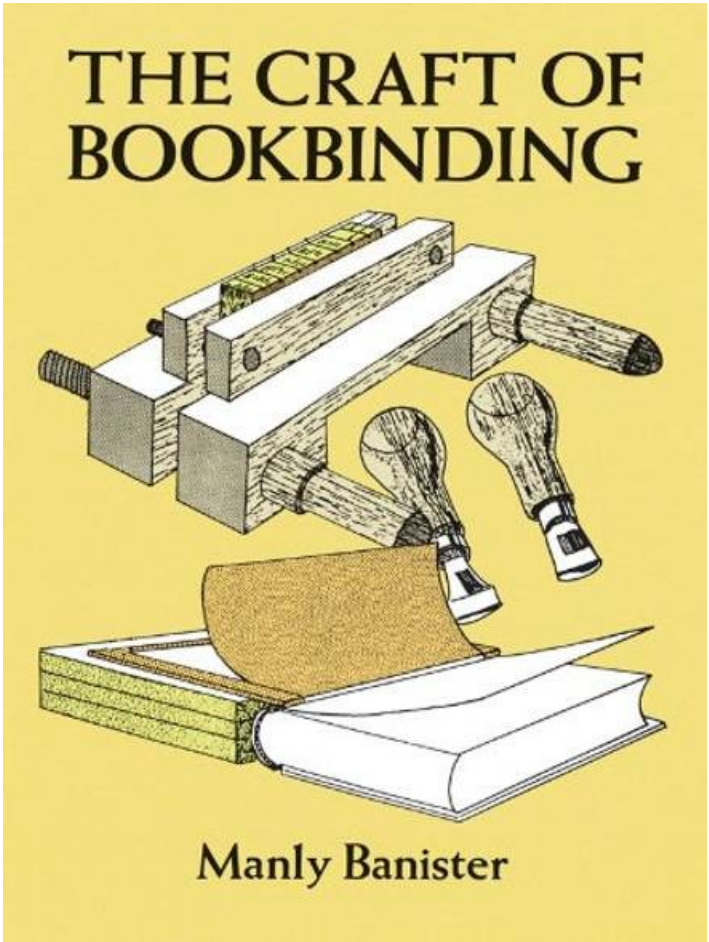
-cut card stock big enough to cover the inside of the cover and the first page of signatures
-glue in the card stock. Use sponge brush for even spreading of glue, and no air pockets
-repeat for inside of back cover

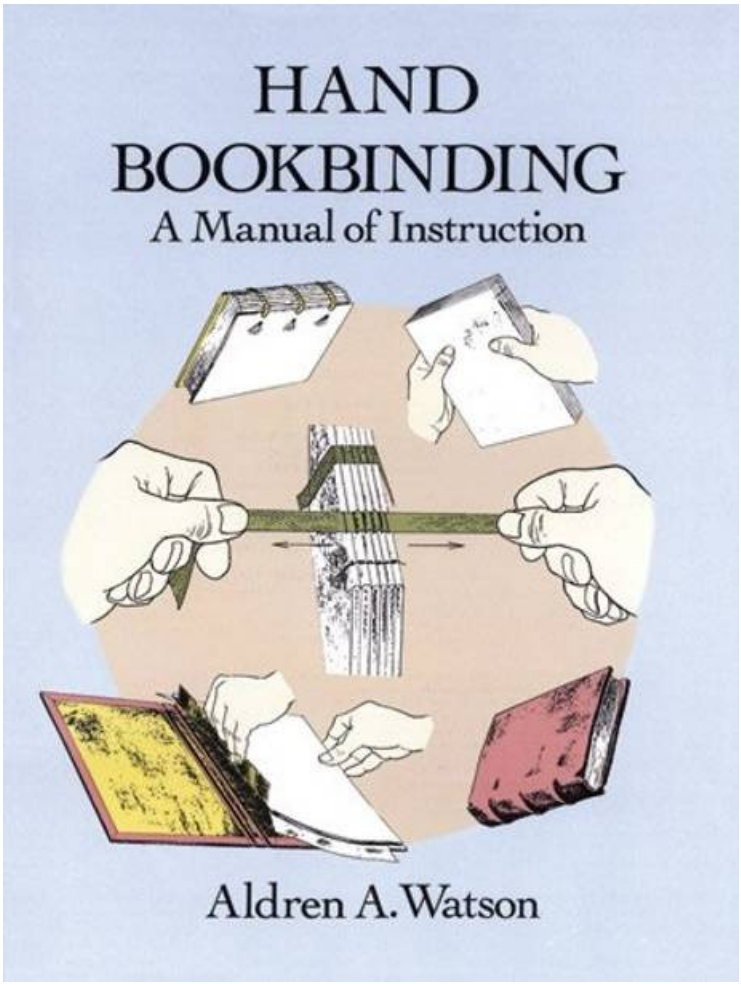
In the comments after one of her videos, there is a mention of a free program, Bookbinder 3.0, that takes a PDF file of the book, and makes a PDF file for each signature. I downloaded the program, and it really works well. The web site for the free program is.....http://quantumelephant.co.uk/bookbinder/bookbinder.html You can get to it from this link.

So my process will probably end up being a blend of the web site Instructable, and the woman's Youtube videos. I did pick up that I want a blank page on my first and last signatures, because they will be glued to the front inside cover, and back inside cover. This is an input on the Bookbinder program to generate this extra page.

Books

I went on Amazon, and per the reader reviews, I bought 2 Kindle version books on bookbinding.





Book Reading

I read both books cover-to-cover. Although informative, I learn much more from good illustrations, or videos of the actual processes. I found it difficult to follow either of the two books in the details, when there is no or limited illustrations. I'm sure I will refer back to them once I start doing and developing my process.

After reading both books, I still don't understand a practical way to print a title on the cover or spline of a cloth bound book. I don't plan on making dust covers for my books at this time. Maybe I will learn how to do this.

Tools & Supplies

After doing the study noted above, I went on Amazon and ordered enough tools and supplies to do a trial book binding.

I did not order any fancy paper for lining the front and back of the book yet. I figure I can wait to buy this, after I decide what size books I will be making.

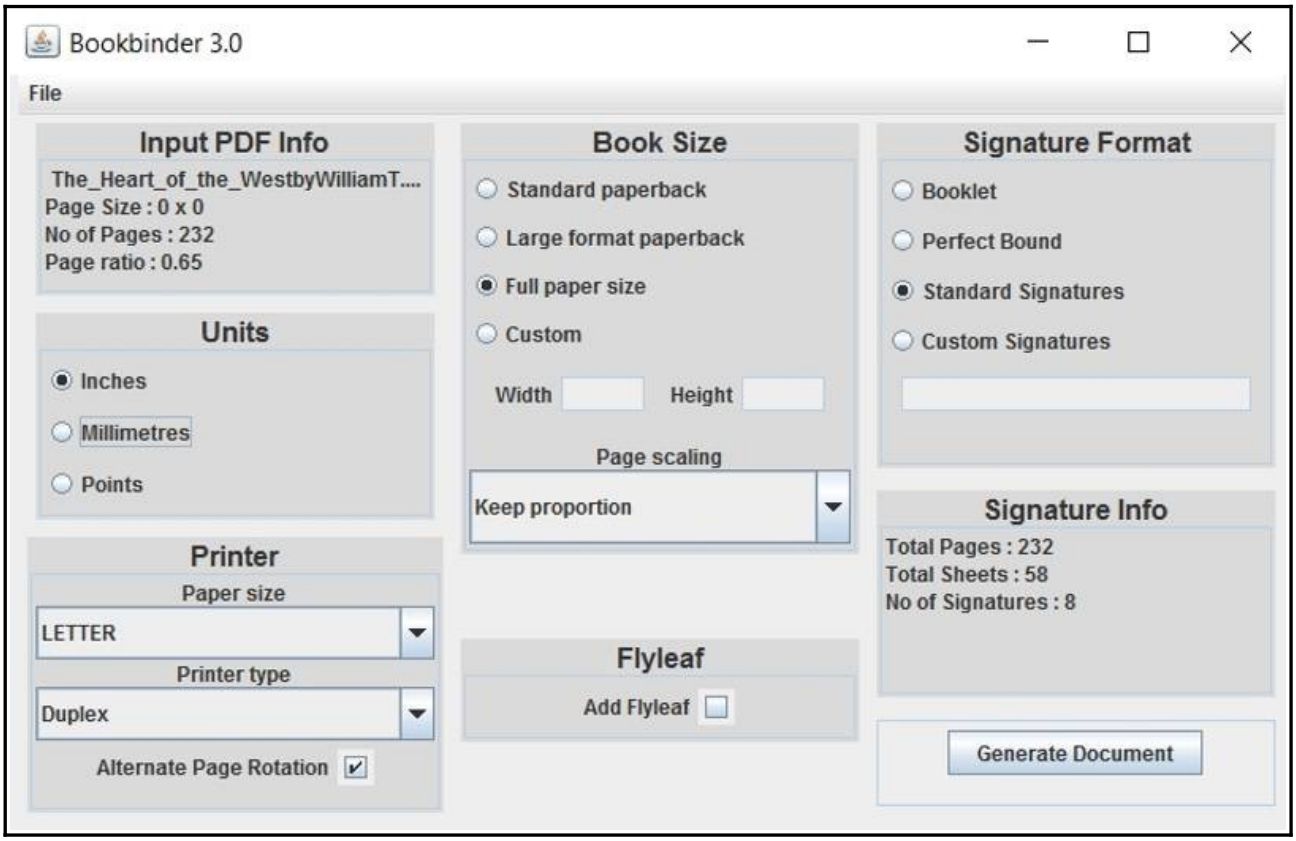
Which Book to Bind 1st?

Since I am a Fairbury historian, I decided I would like to bind up a story written by a Fairbury citizen named William T. Stackpole. He wrote a novel in 1871 titled The Heart of the West. If I am able to get it hand bound at the appropriate quality level, I will donate it to the Fairbury Echoes Museum.

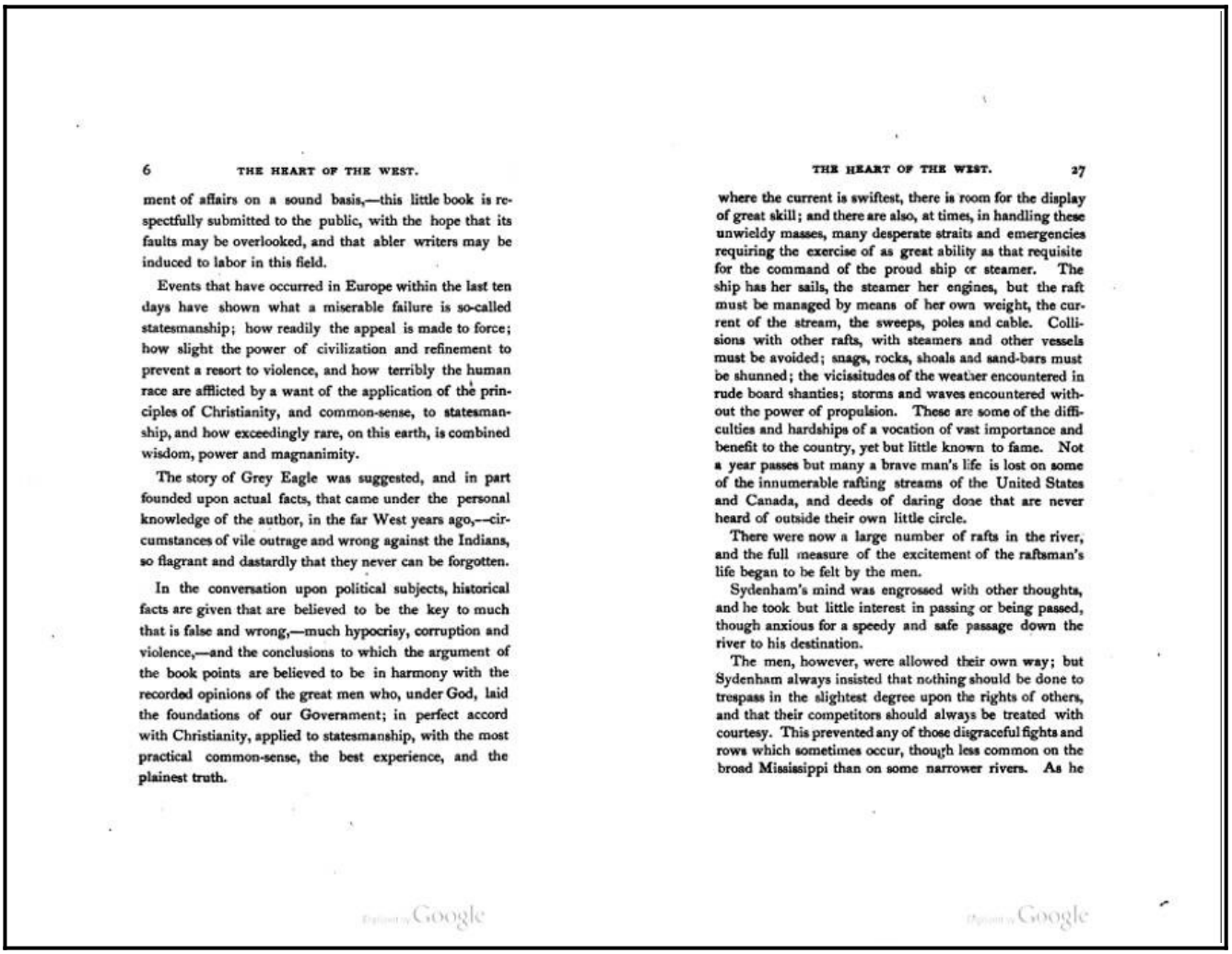
Someone scanned in this book for Google Books, so I was able to get a PDF file of this 145 year-old book. That is the good news. When the book was scanned, there were extra pages in the PDF file at the front and the back of the file. I deleted these pages, so only the book itself was left.

When I tried to create the signature files using the Bookbinder 3.0 program noted above, the text block for each page was too small with respect to the page size. I reviewed the Google Book file more carefully, and found the vertical margins were different between the odd and even pages.

Here are the Bookbinder inputs I used for the 1st trial. It took me some trial & error to figure out the right settings.....



Here is the output using these Bookbinder inputs. You can see the text block is small with respect to the page size.....…



ment of affairs on a sound basis,—this little book is respectfully submitted to the public, with the hope that its faults may be overlooked, and that abler writers may be induced to labor in this field.

Events that have occurred in Europe within the last ten days have shown what a miserable failure is so-called statesmanship; how readily the appeal is made to force; how slight the power of civilization and refinement to prevent a resort to violence, and how terribly the human race are afflicted by a want of the application of the principles of Christianity, and common-sense, to statesmanship, and how exceedingly rare, on this earth, is combined wisdom, power and magnanimity.

The story of Grey Eagle was suggested, and in part founded upon actual facts, that came under the personal knowledge of the author, in the far West years ago,—circumstances of vile outrage and wrong against the Indians, so flagrant and dastardly that they never can be forgotten.

In the conversation upon political subjects, historical facts are given that are believed to be the key to much that is false and wrong,—much hypocrisy, corruption and violence,—and the conclusions to which the argument of the book points are believed to be in harmony with the recorded opinions of the great men who, under God, laid the foundations of our Government; in perfect accord with Christianity, applied to statesmanship, with the most practical common-sense, the best experience, and the plainest truth.

Digitized by Google

where the current is swiftest, there is room for the display of great skill; and there are also, at times, in handling these unwieldy masses, many desperate straits and emergencies requiring the exercise of as great ability as that requisite for the command of the proud ship or steamer. The ship has her sails, the steamer her engines, but the raft must be managed by means of her own weight, the current of the stream, the sweeps, poles and cable. Collisions with other rafts, with steamers and other vessels must be avoided; snags, rocks, shoals and sand-bars must be shunned; the vicissitudes of the weather encountered in rude board shanties; storms and waves encountered without the power of propulsion. These are some of the difficulties and hardships of a vocation of vast importance and benefit to the country, yet but little known to fame. Not a year passes but many a brave man's life is lost on some of the innumerable rafting streams of the United States and Canada, and deeds of daring done that are never heard of outside their own little circle.

There were now a large number of rafts in the river, and the full measure of the excitement of the raftsman's life began to be felt by the men.

Sydenham's mind was engrossed with other thoughts, and he took but little interest in passing or being passed, though anxious for a speedy and safe passage down the river to his destination.

The men, however, were allowed their own way; but Sydenham always insisted that nothing should be done to trespass in the slightest degree upon the rights of others, and that their competitors should always be treated with courtesy. This prevented any of those disgraceful fights and rows which sometimes occur, though less common on the broad Mississippi than on some narrower rivers. As he

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The text print is so small, it would be hard to read this book.

This led me on a quest to maximize the text block size, yet still leave big enough vertical margins.

One option I explored was making a screen print of each page, then pasting it into Powerpoint, then output the ppt to a PDF file. This would probably work, but boy it would take tons of time to do 232 pages.....plus you lose some resolution in the text doing this method.

After much trial & error, and finding programs on the internet, here is the process I ended up with to get good signature files.....

Split Original File into Two Files
Because the vertical margins were different between the odd and even pages, I split the original PDF file into 2 different files.....the odd pages.....and the even pages.

I found a free online site to split the file into odd and even pages.....https://smallpdf.com/split-pdf.....you can link to it here.

I had to do this operation twice on the original file.....1st to extract the odd pages.....then 2nd time to extract the even pages.

Crop the 2 different files

I wanted to have the same vertical margins on both odd and even pages, which the original Google Book file did not have. I also wanted to get rid of the Google Book watermark in the lower RH corner of each page (see example page above). I found a free online program to crop the 2 files.....PDFresizer.com.....you can link to it here.

You have to guess on the crop size for the 2 different files. I took a screen shot of the crop box for the first operation on the odd pages, then eyeballed and tried to get the same size crop box for the even pages. I initially cropped and left very little margins around the text. This did not work on creating good signature files. I had to go back and leave some margin all the way around the text boxes.

Combine the 2 cropped files

I could not find a free program that would combine two files, one with the odd numbered pages, and one with the even numbered pages. After much searching I gave up, and paid $8.00 for a 1 week subscription to www.sedja.com for their software. You can link to it here. I downloaded their program to my PC, and it worked great. You can pay for an online conversion option also.

At this point, I had 1 PDF file that was cropped such that some border was left around the text box. I was now ready to see if I could get good signature files.

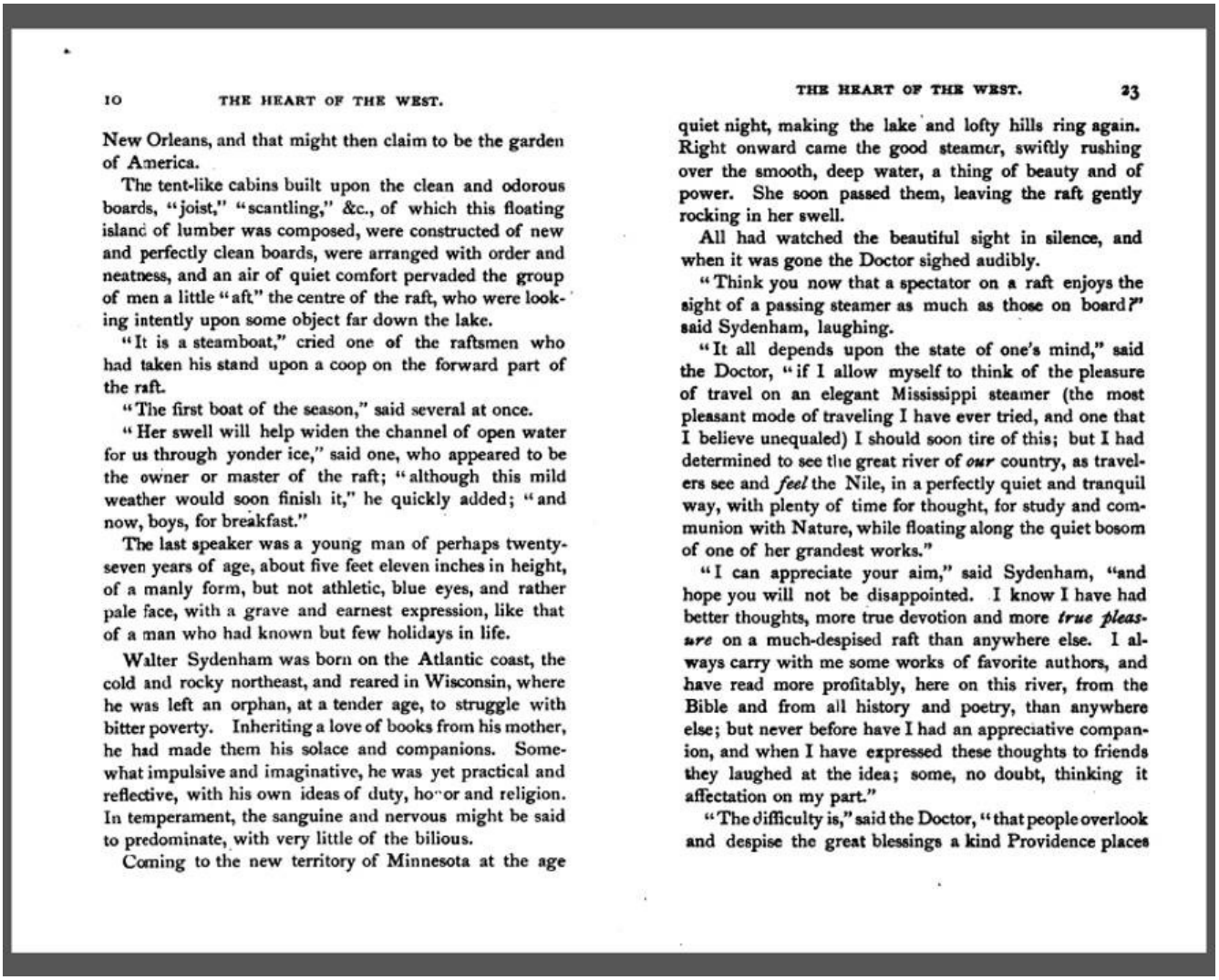
Making Signature files using Bookbinder 3.0 program

I used the free Bookbinder program to generate the signature files. The inputs to the program were the same as above.....except with an updated file name.....

A Miracle Happens

I finally got good signature files, with the text size as big as possible, yet still enough margins around the title block. There is enough margin around the text block to trim the edges also.

A sample is shown below:



New Orleans, and that might then claim to be the garden of America.

The tent-like cabins built upon the clean and odorous boards, "joist," "scantling," &c., of which this floating island of lumber was composed, were constructed of new and perfectly clean boards, were arranged with order and neatness, and an air of quiet comfort pervaded the group of men a little "aft" the centre of the raft, who were looking intently upon some object far down the lake.

"It is a steamboat," cried one of the raftsmen who had taken his stand upon a coop on the forward part of the raft.

"The first boat of the season," said several at once.

"Her swell will help widen the channel of open water for us through yonder ice," said one, who appeared to be the owner or master of the raft; "although this mild weather would soon finish it," he quickly added; "and now, boys, for breakfast."

The last speaker was a young man of perhaps twenty-seven years of age, about five feet eleven inches in height, of a manly form, but not athletic, blue eyes, and rather pale face, with a grave and earnest expression, like that of a man who had known but few holidays in life.

Walter Sydenham was born on the Atlantic coast, the cold and rocky northeast, and reared in Wisconsin, where he was left an orphan, at a tender age, to struggle with bitter poverty. Inheriting a love of books from his mother, he had made them his solace and companions. Somewhat impulsive and imaginative, he was yet practical and reflective, with his own ideas of duty, honor and religion. In temperament, the sanguine and nervous might be said to predominate, with very little of the bilious.

Coming to the new territory of Minnesota at the age

quiet night, making the lake and lofty hills ring again. Right onward came the good steamer, swiftly rushing over the smooth, deep water, a thing of beauty and of power. She soon passed them, leaving the raft gently rocking in her swell.

All had watched the beautiful sight in silence, and when it was gone the Doctor sighed audibly.

"Think you now that a spectator on a raft enjoys the sight of a passing steamer as much as those on board?" said Sydenham, laughing.

"It all depends upon the state of one's mind," said the Doctor, "if I allow myself to think of the pleasure of travel on an elegant Mississippi steamer (the most pleasant mode of traveling I have ever tried, and one that I believe unequaled) I should soon tire of this; but I had determined to see the great river of *our* country, as travelers see and *feel* the Nile, in a perfectly quiet and tranquil way, with plenty of time for thought, for study and communion with Nature, while floating along the quiet bosom of one of her grandest works."

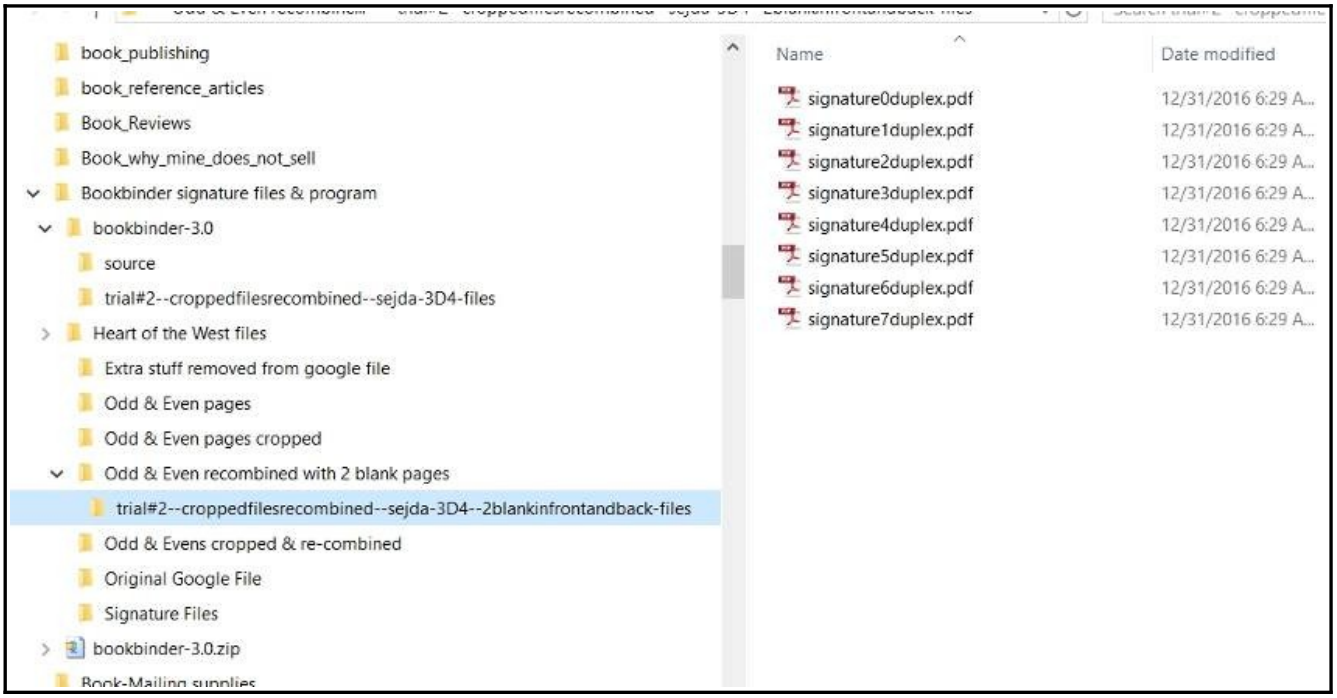
"I can appreciate your aim," said Sydenham, "and hope you will not be disappointed. I know I have had better thoughts, more true devotion and more *true pleasure* on a much-despised raft than anywhere else. I always carry with me some works of favorite authors, and have read more profitably, here on this river, from the Bible and from all history and poetry, than anywhere else; but never before have I had an appreciative companion, and when I have expressed these thoughts to friends they laughed at the idea; some, no doubt, thinking it affectation on my part."

"The difficulty is," said the Doctor, "that people overlook and despise the great blessings a kind Providence places

Project Status

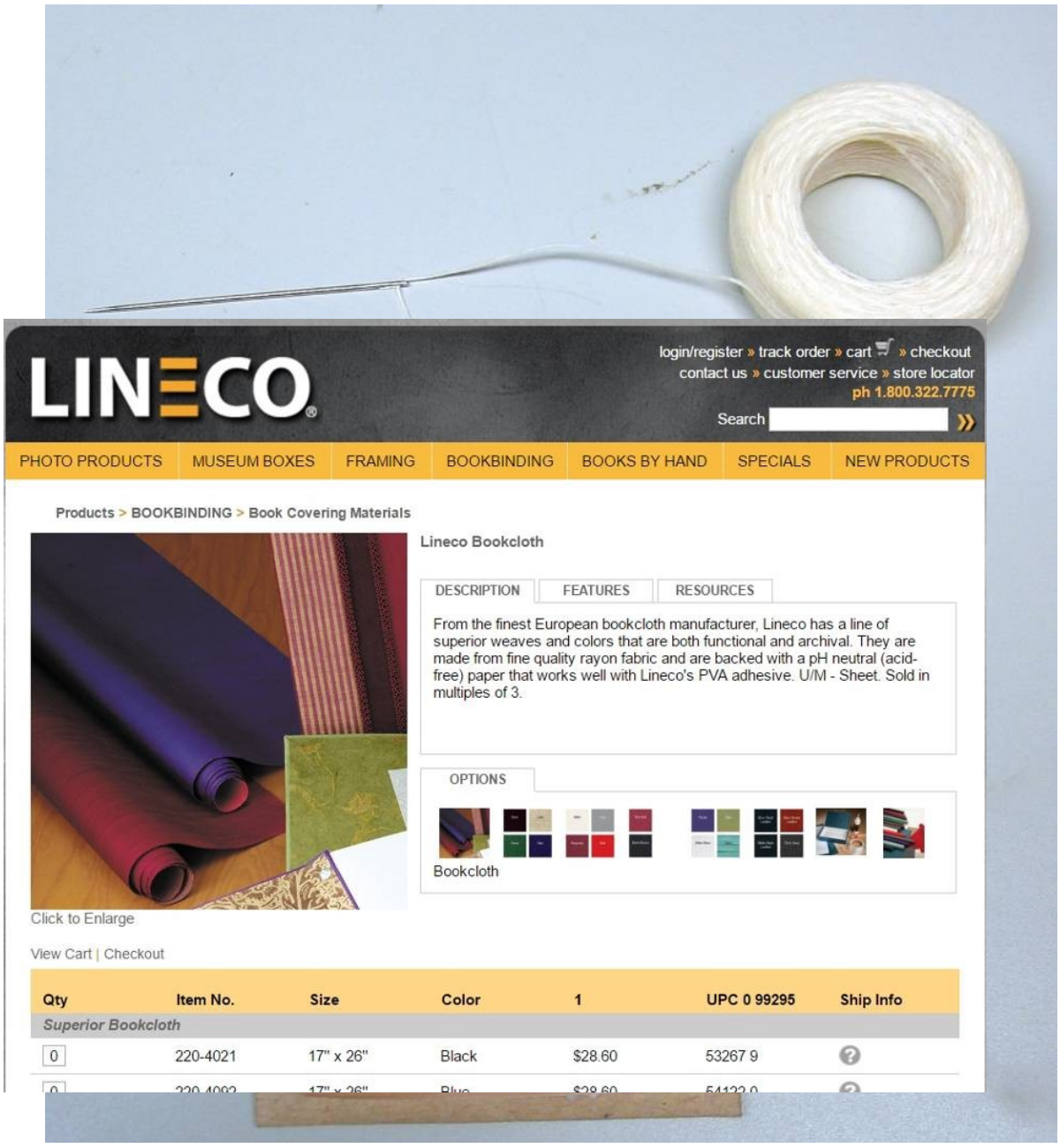
After many hours of computer work, I finally have good signature files to print the pages and make signatures. My 1st book will have pages that are 5.5 inches wide and 8.5 inches tall (a regular sheet of 8.5x11 paper folded in half).

Now I need my tools and supplies to arrive. The first step will be sewing up the signatures. Below is the sub-directory with the good signature files:



First Batch of Tools & Supplies Arrive Dec 30, 2016

I think I have everything to start the process of binding my first book :)



Ball Handle
Extra Heavy Duty
AWL
LINECO
BINDER'S
NEEDLES
Five imported needles
Heavy duty
Blunted point
CHIPBOARD
NATURAL
MEDIUM WEIGHT
25 SHEETS 12X12"
K57CB1212-25

Arriving Jan 4, 2017 - Jan 9, 2017

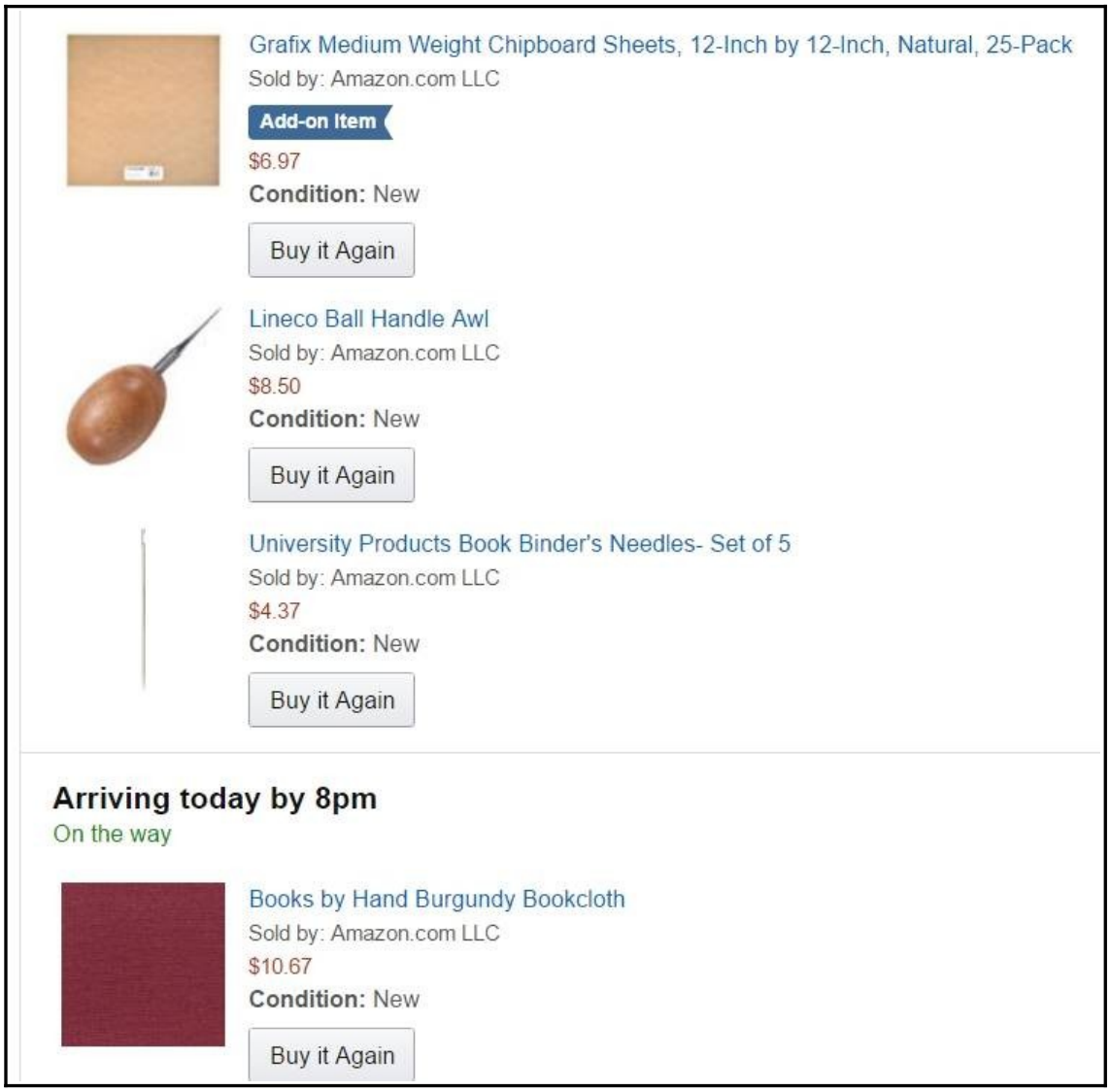
Shipped

Irish Waxed Linen, Natural -45 Yards

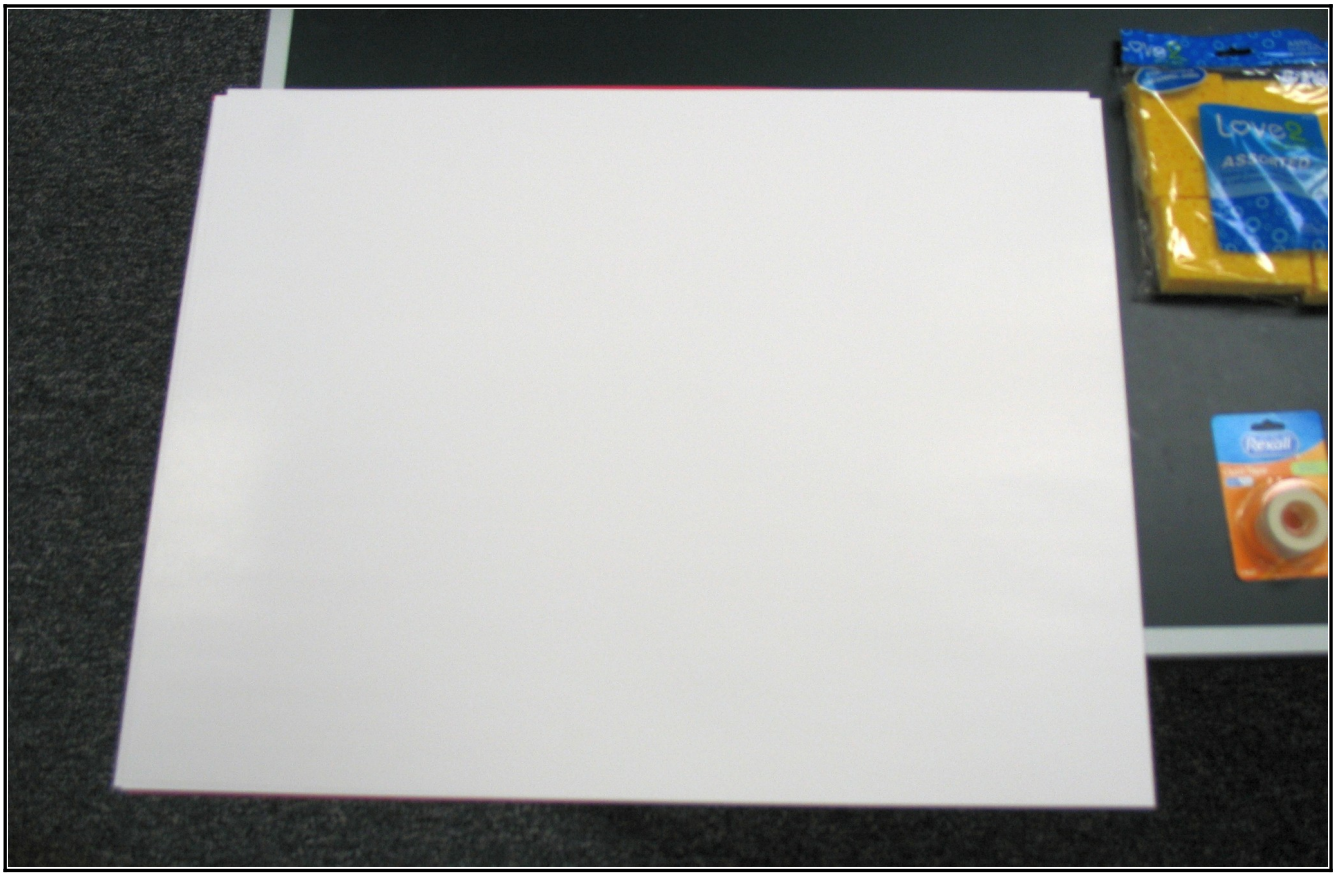
Sold by: Baubles & Beads

$6.95

Buy it Again



Different Thickness and Colors of Card Stock from Dollar General



Ribbon from Dollar General

Cloth tape from dollar general, cheese cloth and foam brushes from Ace & sponges

I can't remember if I used these sponges on this project or not

The Journey to Bind my 1st Book Continues…

After studying how to bind a book, I decided I needed 2 extra blank pages at the beginning and end of the book. In the binding process, the first and last pages are glued to the covers. I thought to myself, "No problem, just check the flyleaf box on the Bookbinder program, and it will generate those extra pages.

I did this, and printed out the 1st signature. I reviewed this 1st signature, and the first page had printing on it, versus being blank?? Must be a bug in the program. So, I used the $8 program to insert 2 blank pages at the beginning and 2 blank pages at the end of the story PDF file. I then used the Bookbinder program to generate a new batch of signatures, with the flyleaf input box un-checked.

I printed pgs 1-4, and it worked ok with 2 blank pages in front of the title page!! I won't know if it added 2 blank pages at the end of the book until I print the last, and 8th signature stack.

There are so many files involved with changing the original Google Book PDF file into printable signature files, I tried to organize it by creating sub-directories describing each step in the process.

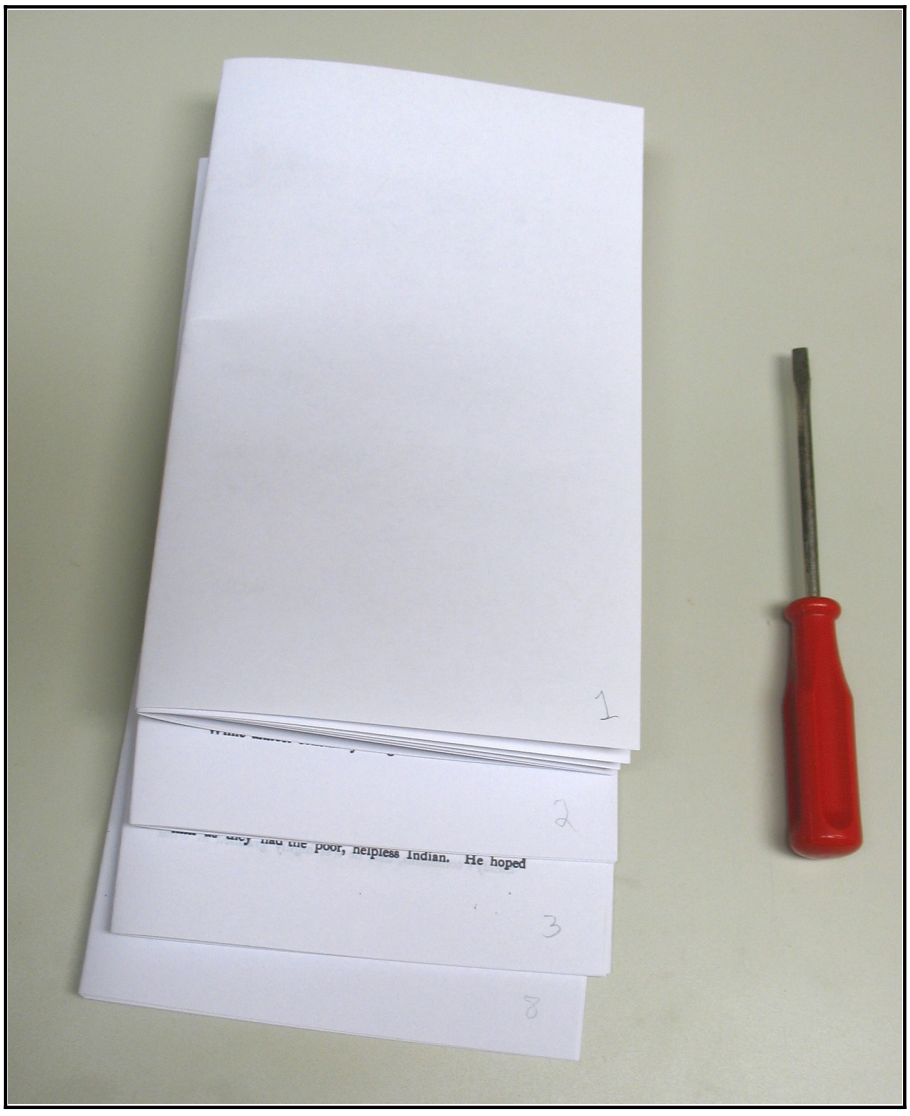
The Bookbinder program also puts the output signature files in what-ever sub-directory the program was run from. You can not change the file names, or the directory where they go. It might be easier to put a copy of the program in the subdirectory where you want the files to go. I went ahead and printed the last signature, and the blank pages were ok :)

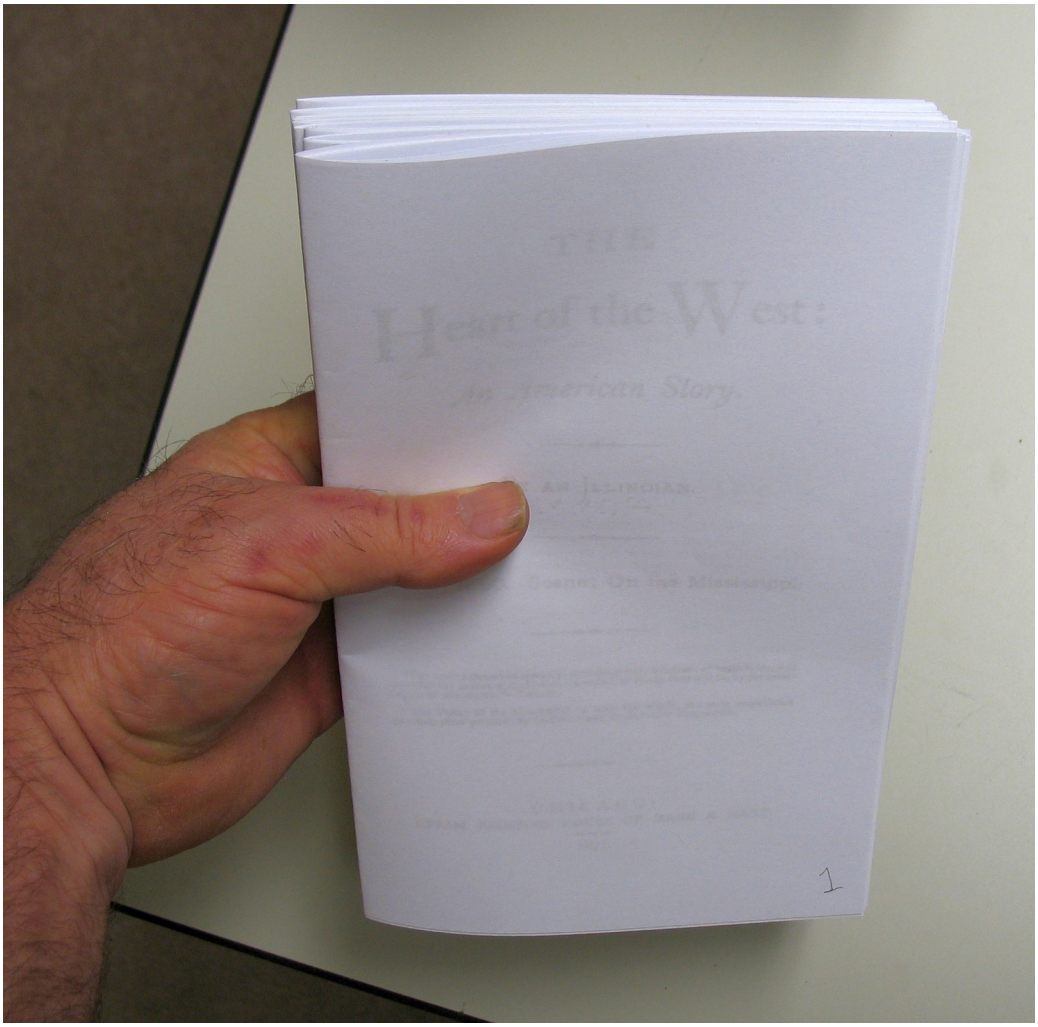
Since I am going to use the stitched method, I need to find some ribbon to sew into the signatures.
Printing Signatures

As I printed each batch of signatures, I lightly marked the number with a pencil.....so I can erase it later. My Canon printer does print on both sides, but it is pretty slow.....patience is required!

Folding the Signatures

I carefully folded each signature, then used the handle end of a screwdriver to press in the crease. Neither the Instructable web site or the Irish lady's video talks about how to press in the fold in the signatures.

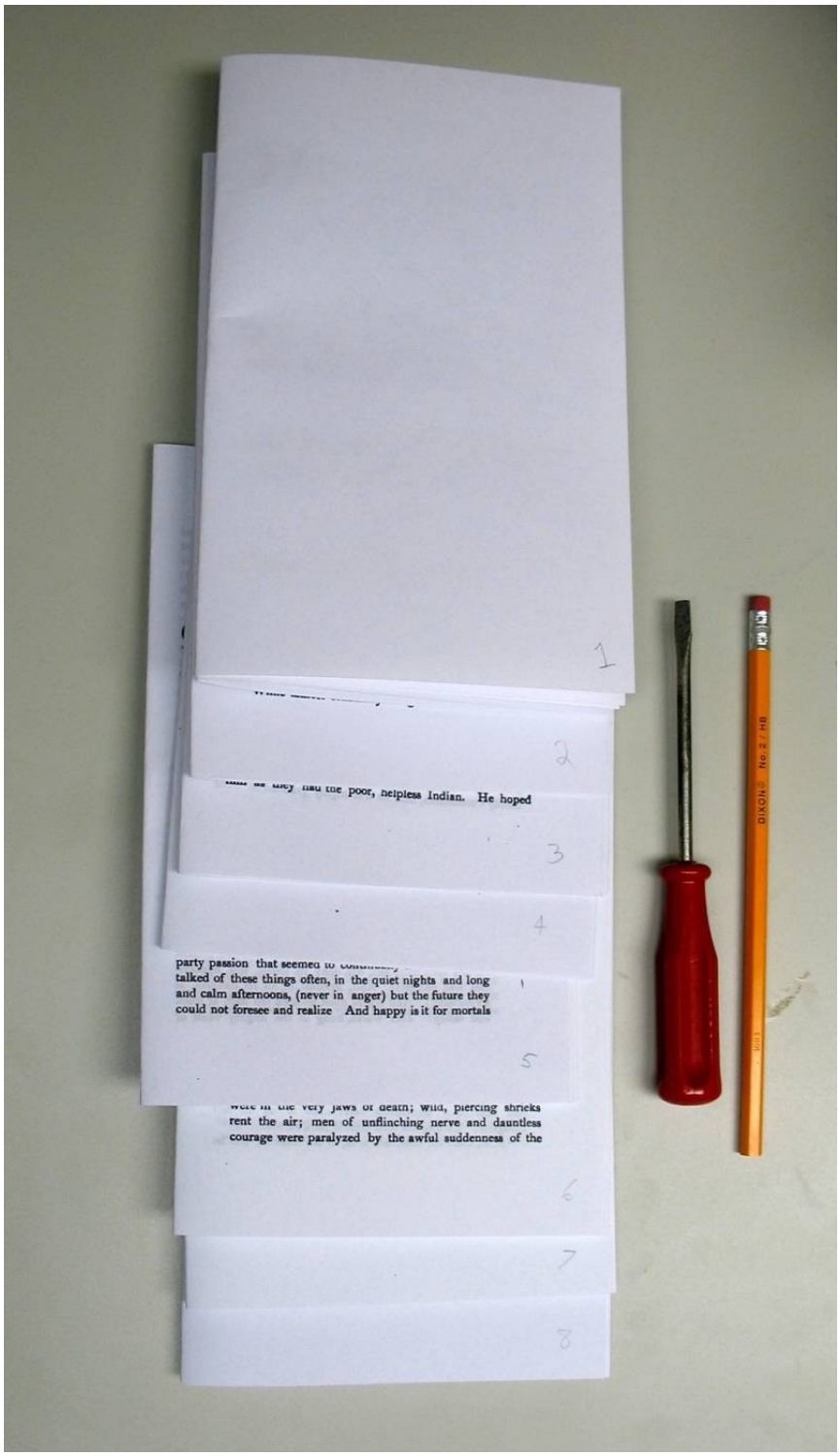



Heart of the West:
1

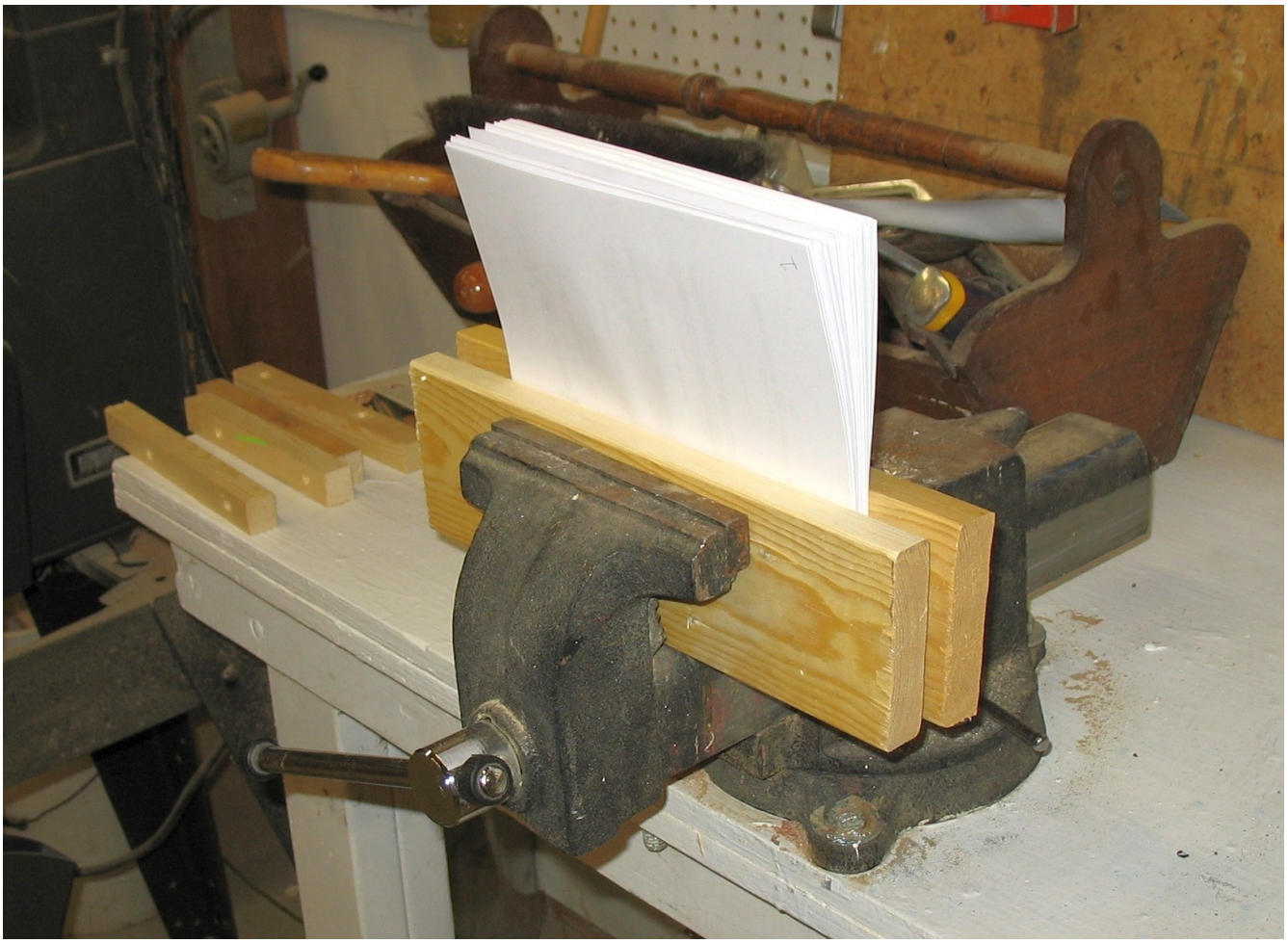
While I was waiting for the signatures to all print out, I went ahead and made sure my new needles would accept the yellow thread that I bought. The thread is waxed and is 0.4 mm in diameter. I had to take the red screwdriver shown above, and flatten the end of the thread. Once I flattened it, I could thread the needle ok.

I also checked out the cover cloth I bought for this project. I went to the Lineco web site, and noticed their cloth is paper backed. I took my roll out of the plastic sack, and there is a very faint paper thickness lining the back of the cloth. I wondered about Elmer's glue seeping into the cloth and creating a problem with the covers, but the paper lining should help to prevent this.

Signatures all Printed - qty of 8

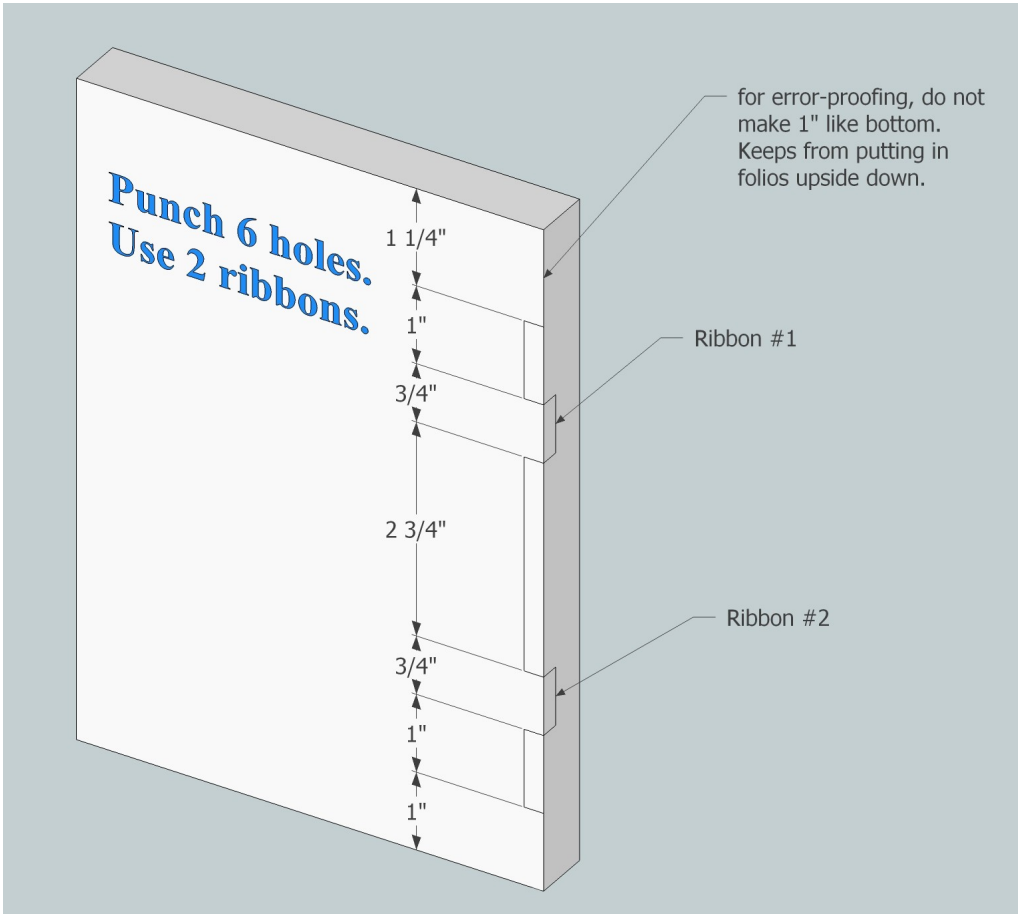


Clamped Signatures in Vise with wood blocks to compress them for 1 Hour



Hole and ribbon design

The Irish lady had 4 holes and 1 ribbon. I want my book super-strong, so I am going with 6 holes and 2 ribbons. This is probably over-kill design wise, but what the heck:)



Punching the Holes

I made a template like the Irish lady, which is a folded piece of paper or card stock. My folded piece did not work well.....the holes were not in the center of the fold. The awl came with instructions. These instructions showed a single strip of card stock, marked with lines.....not folded up. I tried that, and it worked much better for me.

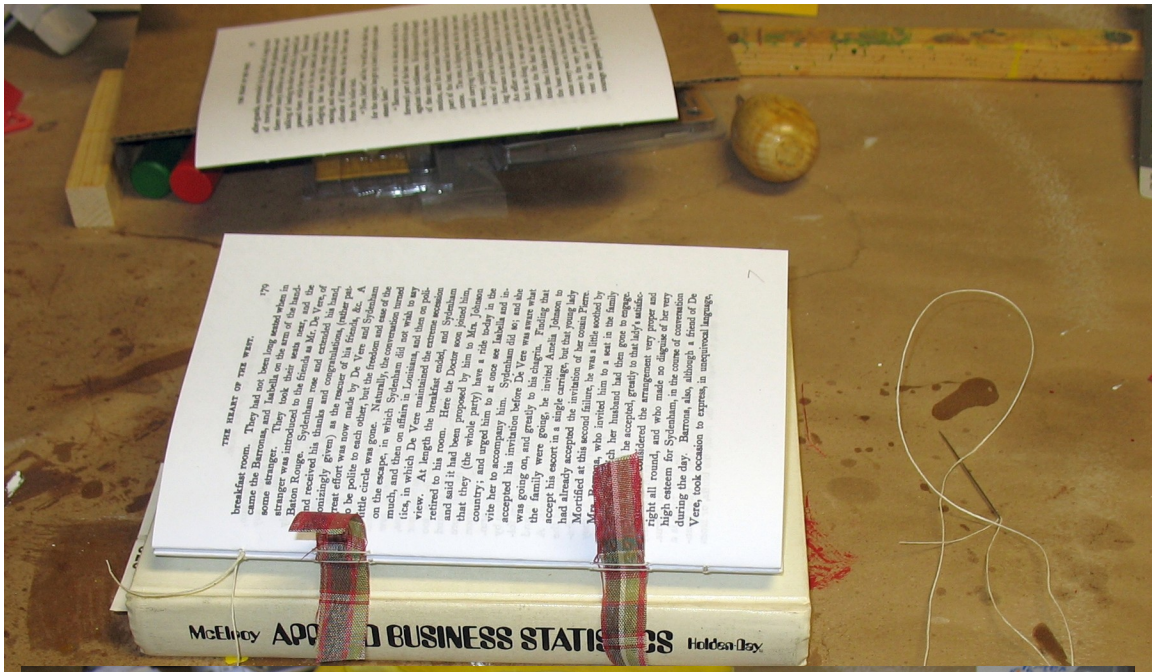
Made in Pakistan
164
THE HEART OF THE WEST.
warm and kind cordiality, the peculiar charm of which
can only exist where perfect mutual esteem, confidence
and sincere regard are felt. At first Isabella took
little part in the conversation, her mother and
ing, but Sydenham was far too gallant a
neglect any lady; and Isabella expressed a
way in which the unwieldy mass was con
clear of the eddies and snags her father h
her from the guards of the boat. Syden
arm, and they walked off to where the p
men guided the raft by means of the sweeps.
walked to the remote and unoccupied part of the raft,
and watched the dark and silent shores, covered with
primeval forests, and laved by the rushing river.
"Do you like to be upon the river, Miss Barnes?"
enquired Sydenham.
"Yes," said Isabella, "though I was born upon the
banks of the river, and have passed nearly all my life
there, yet I never tire of it; and when father took me to
the splendid Hudson, although I enjoyed it very greatly,
yet I was glad to get back home to the banks of the old
river."
"Have you ever seen the Upper Mississippi?" enquired
Sydenham.
"No, I have not," replied Isabella; "and I had antici-
pated so much pleasure from seeing it; but oh, how little
I thought of the horrors of the past day;" and she covered
her face with her hands, and again the unbidden tears
coursed down her cheeks.
"But this is, I hope, all over now," said Sydenham,
"and soon you will be safe in Memphis."
"Oh, pardon my weakness," said Isabella, "it is not all
for myself, but for father, mother, brother, sister, aunt,
TOP
Punch 6 holes.
Use 2 ribbons.
165
velers, placed
re and drown-
girl shuddered
u saved us all,
f you had not
how can we
ortunity," said
I did nothing
ril, your noble
aid Sydenham.
uld," said Isa-
ham spoke of
th enthusiasm,
d noble service
der our feet."
a singular ap-
entlemen were
otherwise than
ight, and they
Steaming on-
s a striking con-
ice remarked it.
t steamer," she
raft is safer, and,
hen they could
ard the steamer.
sometimes safer

I used a piece of cardboard from a box under the signature when I punched it with the awl.....which worked fine. The only issue I had was that I forgot to mark one hole in the template, which I found sewing.....so I had to dis-assemble my sewing and add 1 hole to each signature..... "To err is human" :)

At our Dollar General store, I found some cloth ribbon, which I like much better than cutting a piece from a bow ribbon. I cut my 2 strips just under 3/4" wide, and maybe 3 inches long.

I left about 1.5" on the first stitch, so I can use that tail to tie a square knot on the way back from stitching the 2nd signature. I sewed in the cloth ribbons also.....

I pretty much stitched it like the Irish lady's youtube video. Once you get to the 3rd signature, you start making a knot at each end as you go. It is a "put the needle through the loop" style knot.


McElroy
BUSINESS STATIS
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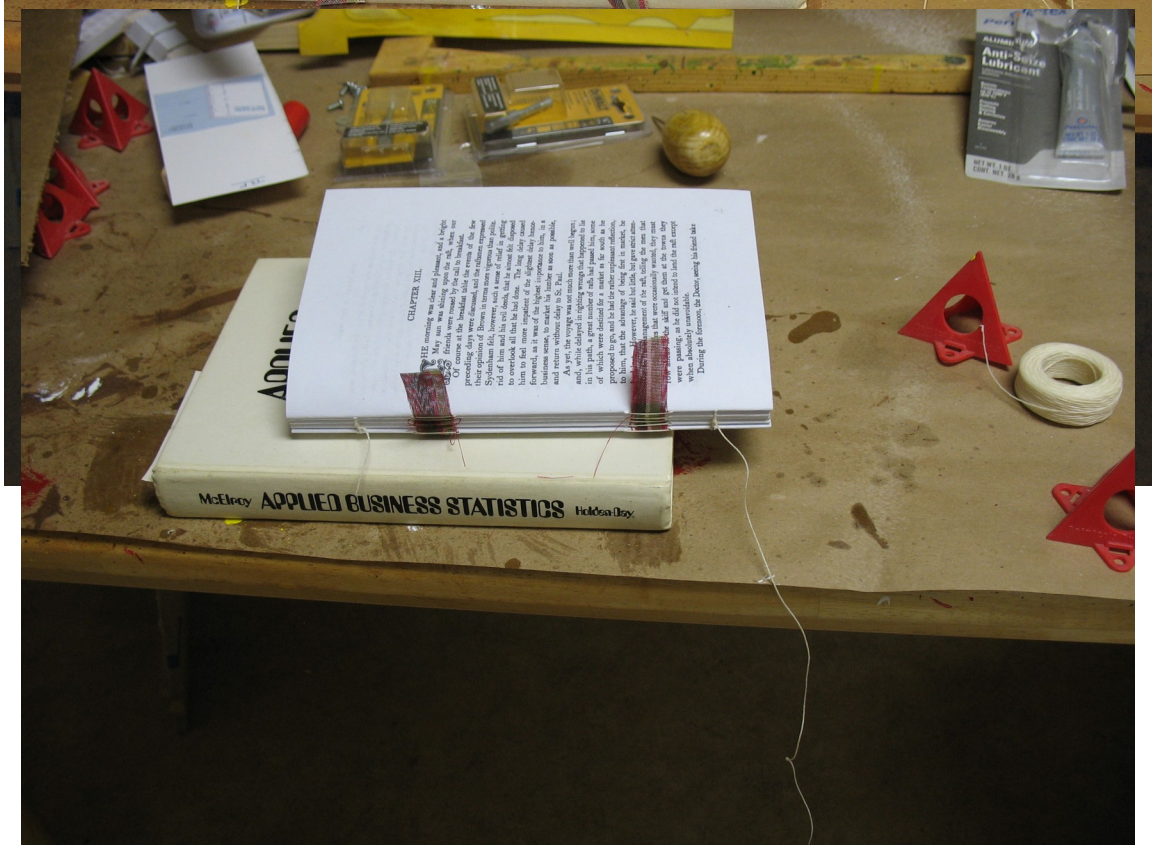
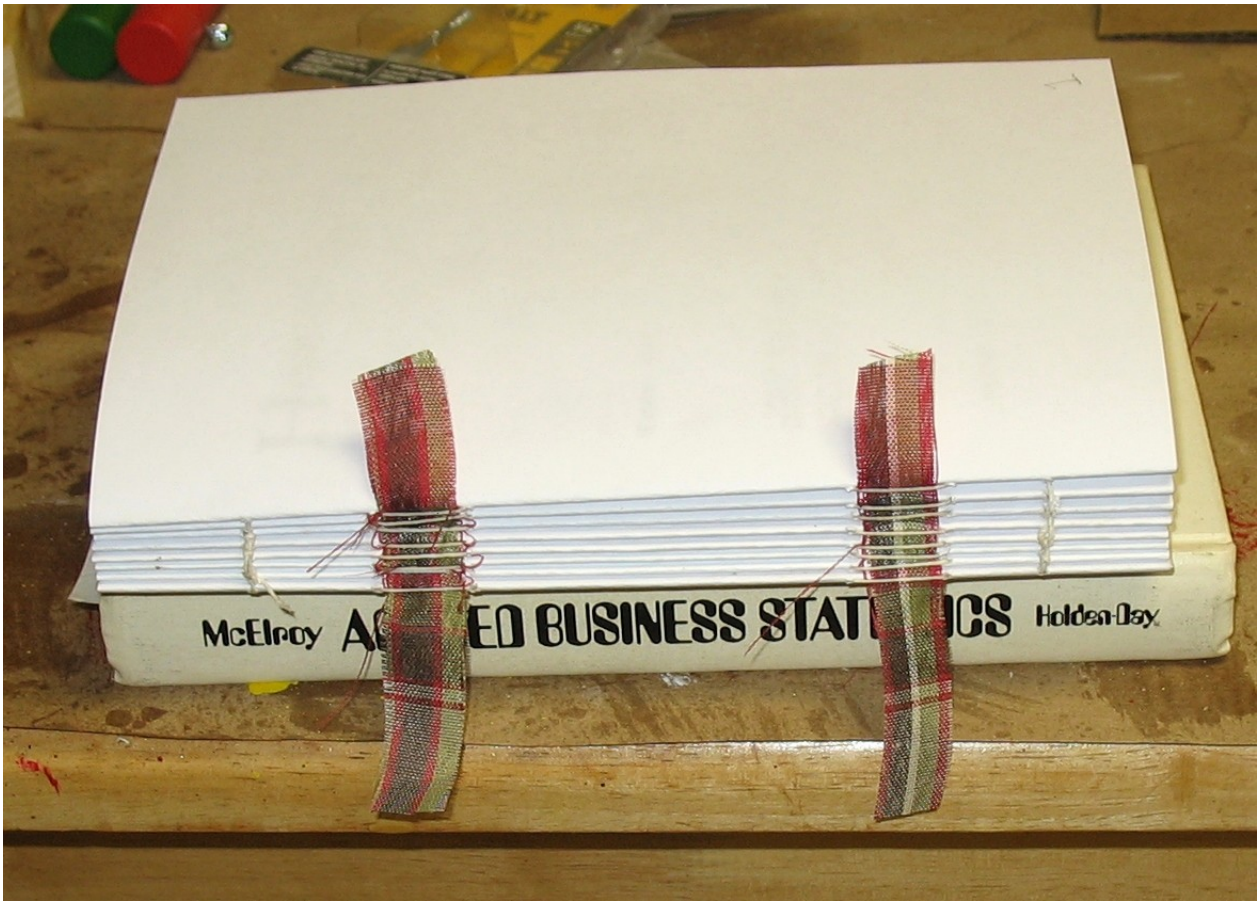
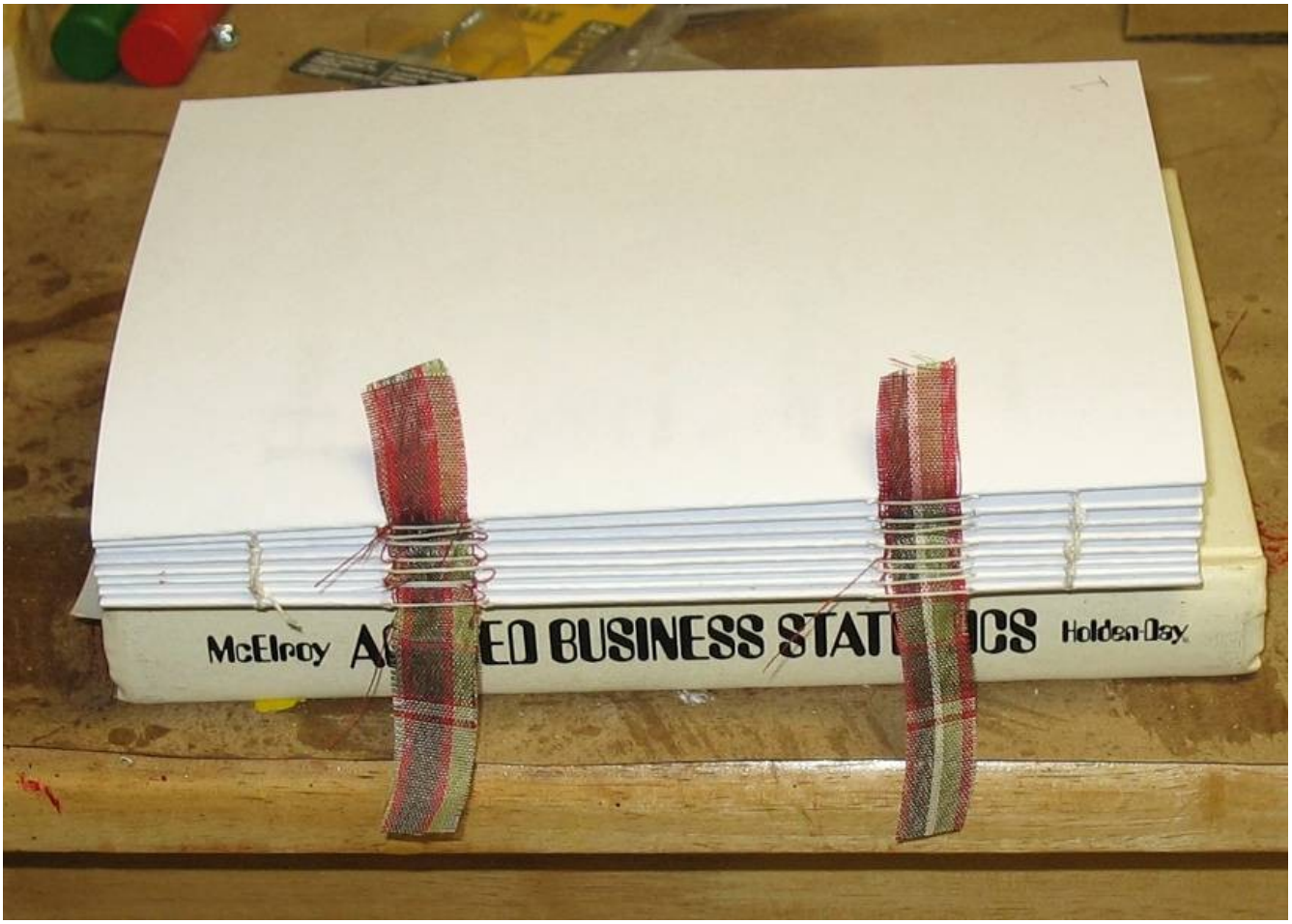
Holden-Day


Anti-Seize
Lubricant
McElroy
APPLIED BUSINESS STATISTICS
Holden-Day



1st Book All Stitched Up

I left about 1/4" when I cut both threads off per the Irish lady's instructions. I forgot to mention it earlier.....it is easier to stitch the signatures with them sitting on an old book.....like my picture shows.....



Gluing Down Ribbons

The next step was to use Elmer's glue to glue down the ribbons. I used a small artist's brush to apply the glue, and to push it into the fabric ribbon. I clamped the spline, and used thumb and forefinger to press down on both sides of the ribbon.

Gluing Spline and card stock

The next step was to liberally soak the spline with Elmer's glue. I had no clamps on the top of the spine when I did this, so the glue could get down into the pages per the Irish lady's instructions.

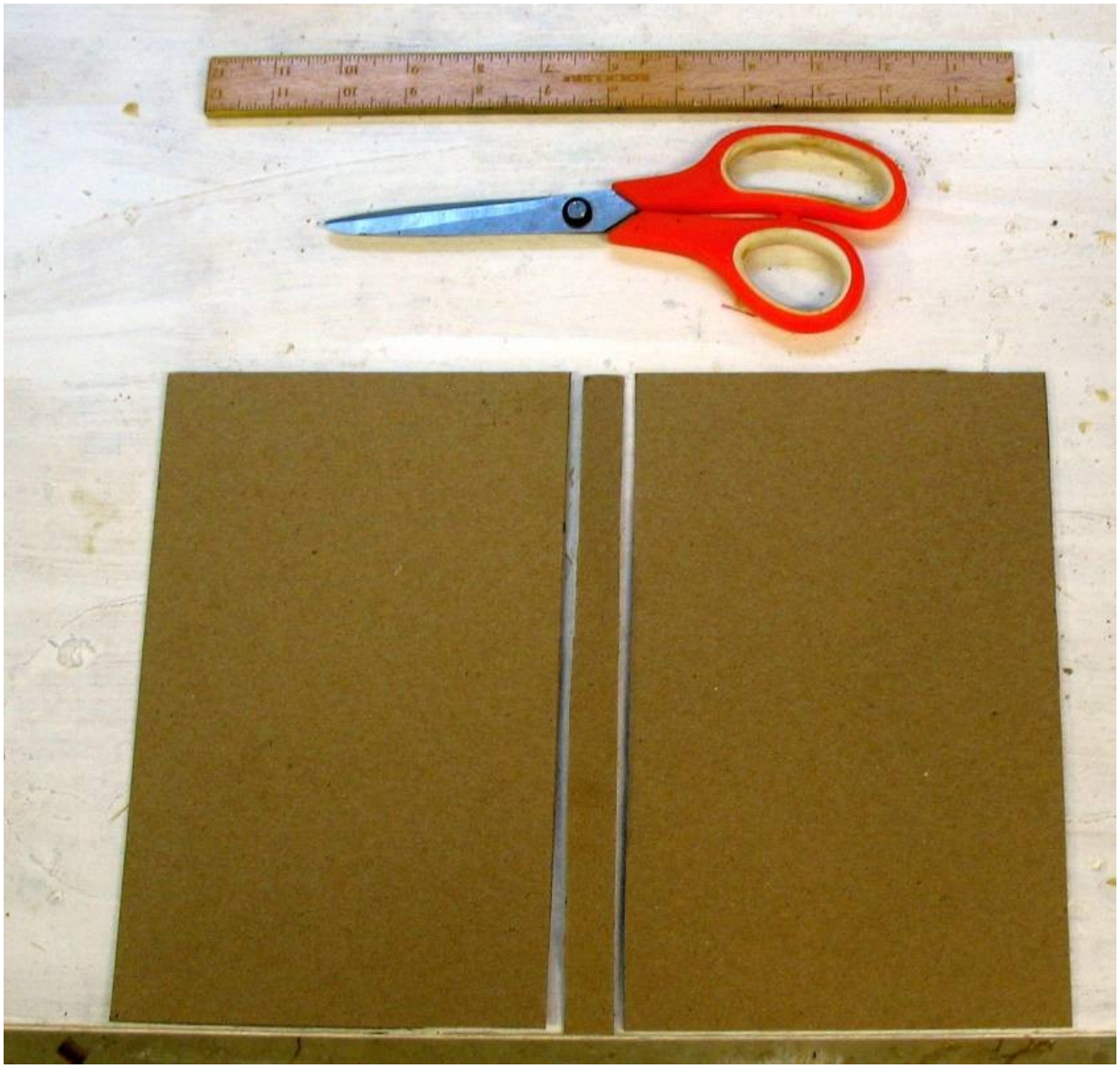
I clamped up the spine, and measured that the card stock cover should be 9/16" wide.....and cut a strip 9/16" by 8.5". I applied Elmer's glue to one side of the card stock and let it soak in a couple minutes.....then applied the card stock to the gluey spine.

Then I clamped the spline using plastic c-clamps as shown below.....

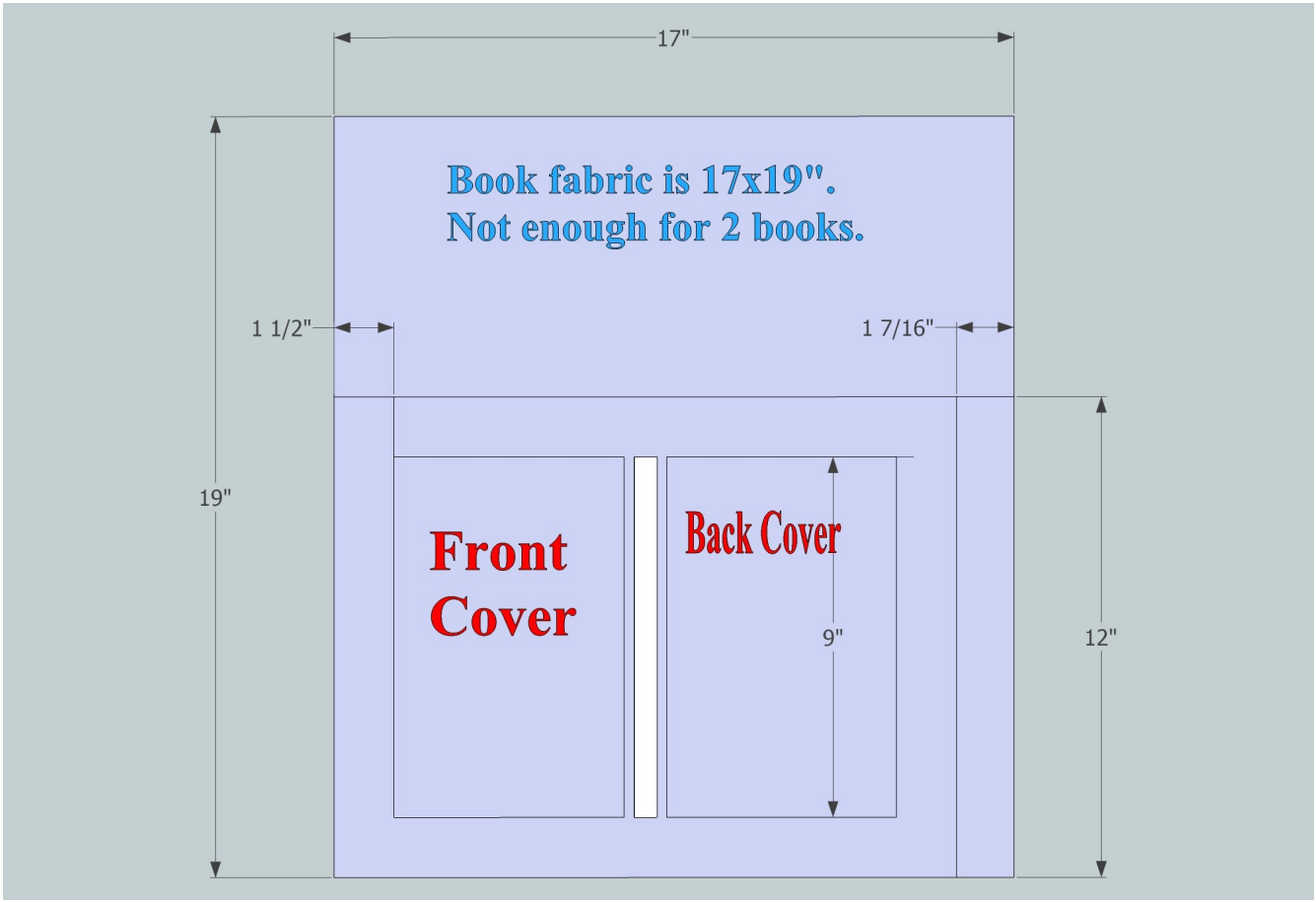
Cover

The Irish lady recommends 2 mm thick cardboard for the covers. 2 mm is 5/64". The material I have is 1/16" or 4/64", pretty close to what she recommends.

I made my covers 1/4" larger than the book size.....the spline is 9/16" wide.....and I will leave a 1/4" gap between each cover and the spline.....I cut my cardboard with a large pair of scissors.....



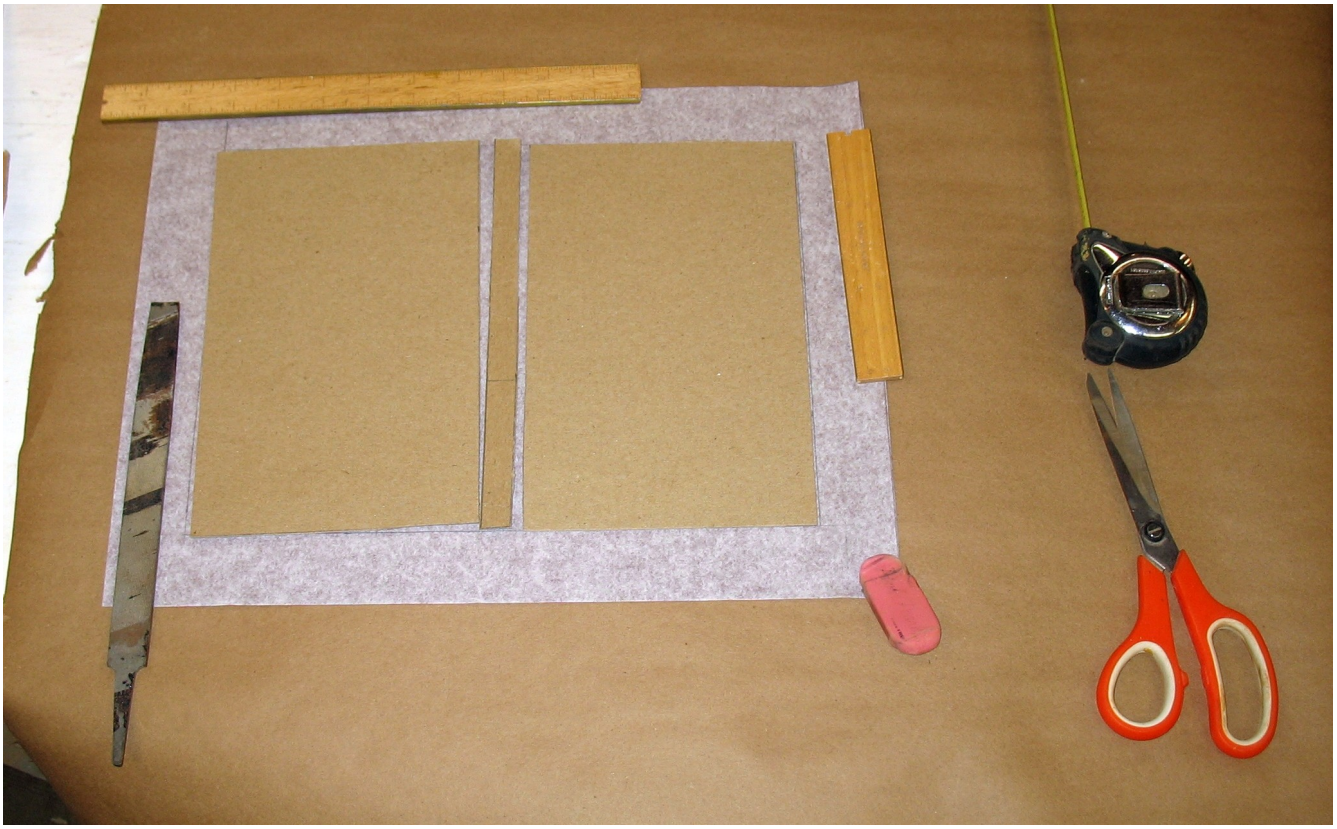
I used Sketchup to see if there is enough material in sheet to cover 2 books. Darn, there is not! The sheet I bought is 17x19 inches.

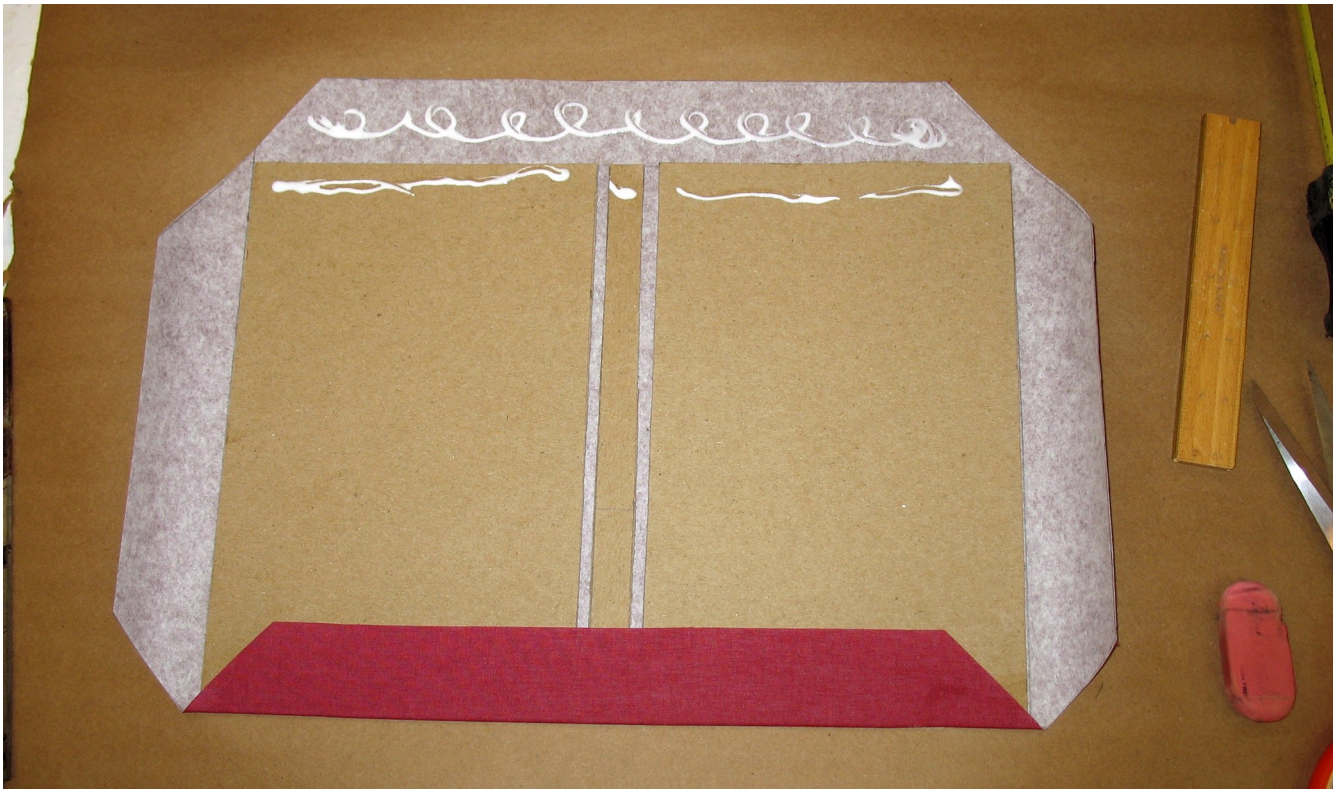


I will use 1.5" of overlap around the book.

I had an error in my sketchup drawing showing how big to cut the cover cloth.....I caught the error in time.....I also fixed the Sketchup file.

The following photos show cutting and gluing down the cover cloth. Like the Irish lady, I cut the cloth at a 45 degree angle, about 1/4" away from the corner of the cover.....then you tuck the little corner under when you glue the last 2 flaps down. I hate foam brushes, but I did use one on this project to smooth out the glue.....it worked ok.





Everything went to plan cutting and applying the cloth book cover. I really had no issues.

Then I tried my guillotine paper cutter to trim the edge opposite the binding.....and failed miserably. My cutter is just not designed to cut a 9/16" thick stack of paper.

I read somewhere that a guy was able to use a belt sander to trim the edge. I tried it.....but it failed also.

I actually made the edge worse. I guess I will have to try the Exacto knive method and see if I can smooth up the edge.

I looked ahead to see how to glue the book into the cover, using a piece of colored card stock on front and back. The Irish lady first glued in some card stock, but her process was very difficult. She said she messed up on the video, because she never does this technique in real life. She made a correction video, but did not use any card stock.....she just used the first and last blank page of the bound book. I did not see a way to make the Irish lady's method work applying a card stock.

So, I went back to the Instructables web site noted above. I like her method. She glues on fabric wider than the spline. Then she glues the book fabric to the front and back cover. Then she glues on the card stock. I'm going to try her method.

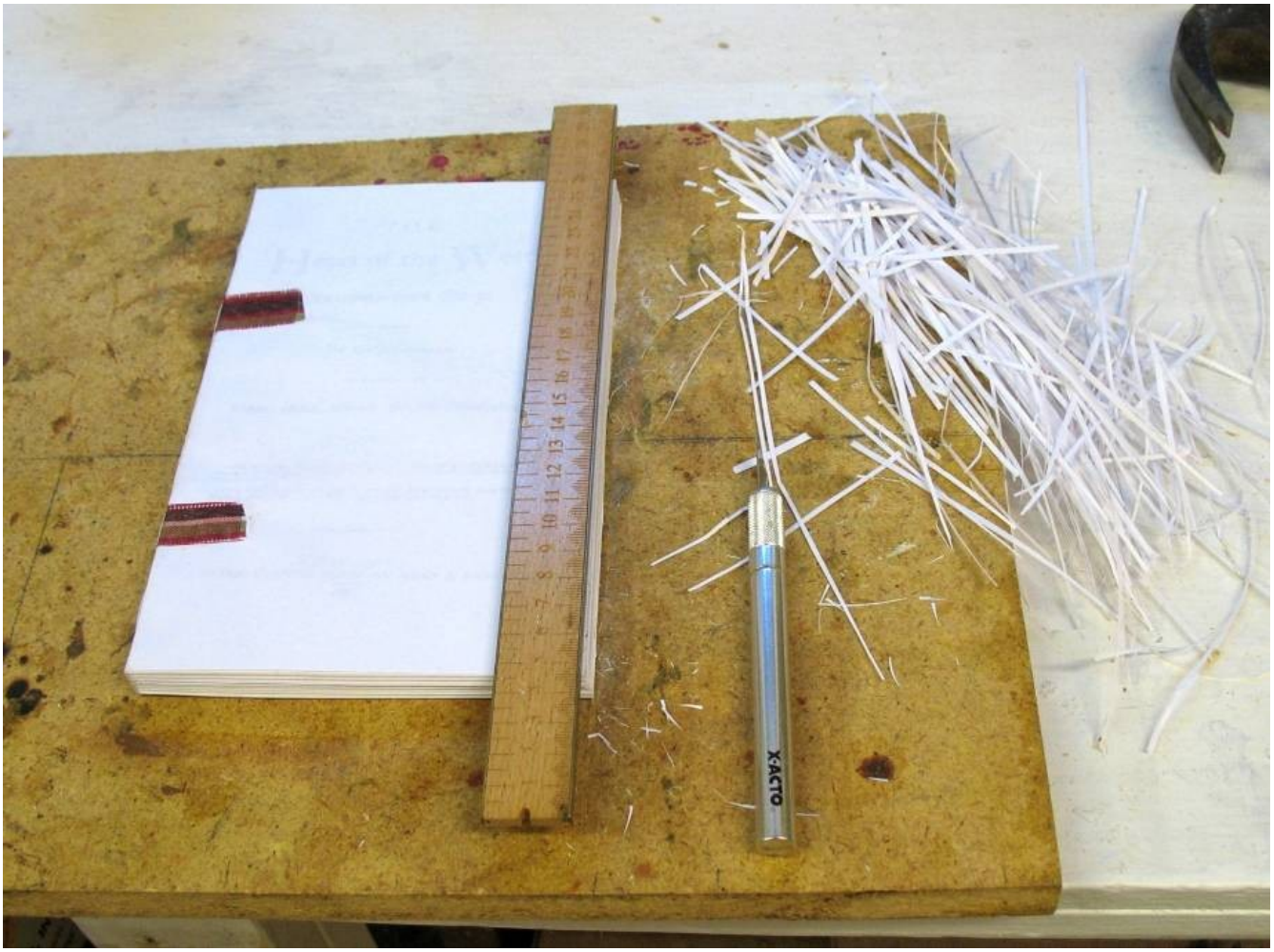
Her fabric is 5 times the width of her book. In my case, that is 5 x 9/16" =2.8 inches. My cloth ribbon is 2.5 inches, so it should work ok.

Exacto Knife

I was not happy with the rough edges opposite the binding, where I had tried to belt-sand the edges.

Belt Sander did not work

I decided to try the Exacto knive method. I put a new, sharp blade into the Exacto knife. I also used a straight-edge with a steel edge. I went slowly, and it took quite a while to do it, but I ended up with a pretty decent edge. If anything, I should have trimmed the edge a little more because I had a few pages that were damaged inside my new cut. I'm calling it quits. I did hand sand the edge a little with 220 grit sandpaper. I am not going to trim the top and bottom of the books.


X-ACTO

Adding the Fabric Wings to the Spline

Because I want a colored card-stock insert (or maybe just white card-stock), I decided to use the Instructables method of adding fabric wings to the spline.....as noted above. I decided it was easiest to prop up the book, so I could apply glue to the spline with a foam brush, lay down the fabric, add some glue on top of the fabric, and work it in with the brush. This method worked well. I did have to trim off the sewn edges on the ribbon.....they are too thick to include with the cloth.

Observation

After I glued on the front cover and let it set a couple of hours, the front and back both started to warp. I'm guessing this is because I did not glue on the book to the inside of the cardboard covers yet. I'm expecting that once I glue in the book, both covers will be flat, since they each have been glued on inside and outside at that point. We will see :)

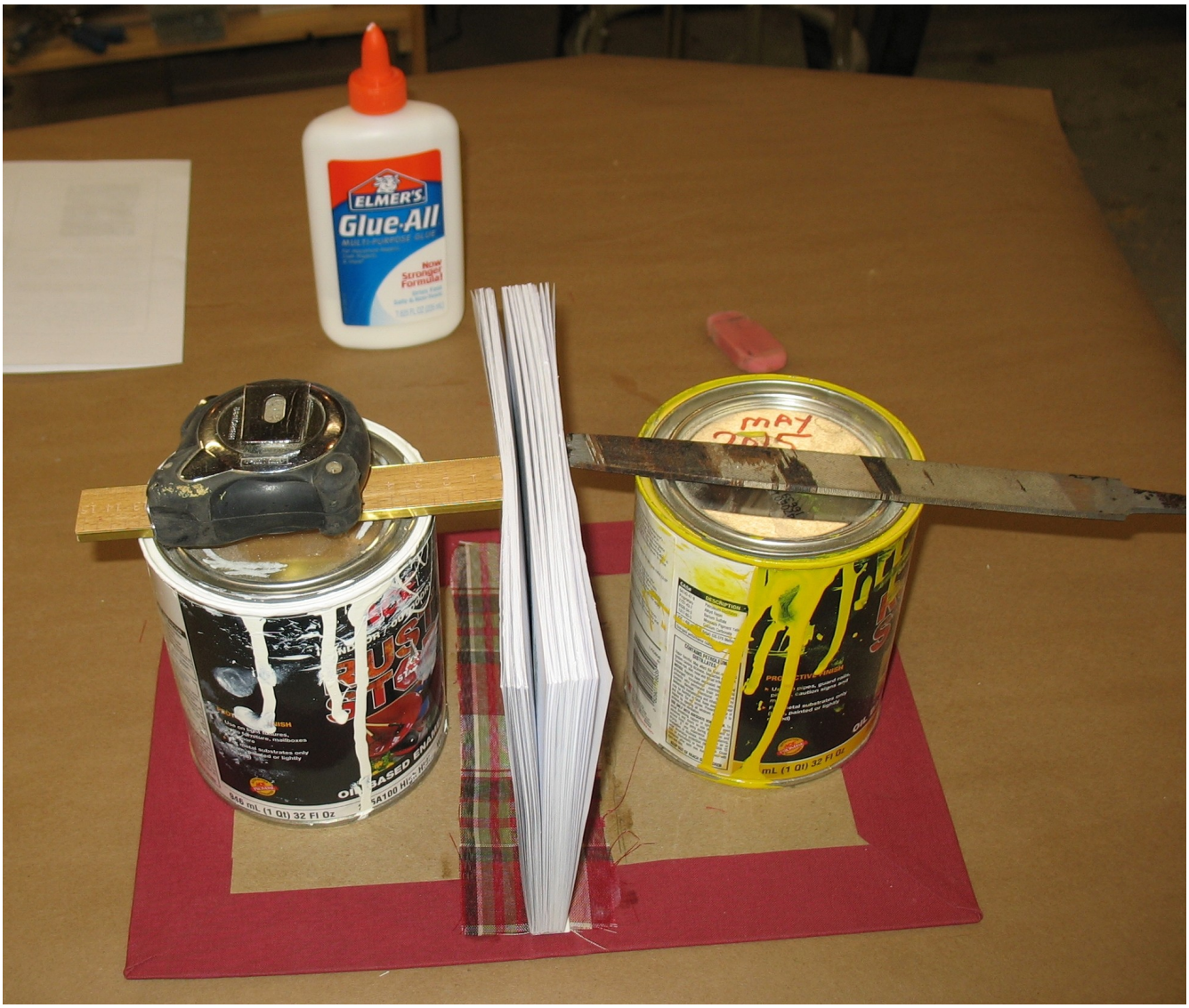
My printer kicked out the yellow cardboard a couple of times, but I finally got it to print ok.

Young William Stackpole.
William T. Stackpole (1827 -1894) lived most of his life in Fairbury, Illinois.
During his life, William was a gold prospector, pioneer, farmer, merchant, grain speculator, oil field worker, real estate sales person, inventor, writer, publisher, and visionary.
William wrote this 1871 novel. He used the phrase "by an Illinoian" instead of Stackpole as the author.
This book was hand-bound by Dale C. Maley, Fairbury historian in 2016. The eight signatures in this book are hand stitched through 6 holes using natural wax coated Irish thread. The cover material is European Burgundy Lineco bookcloth.

Gluing spine to book cover

I marked in pencil the outline of the cloth wings on the covers, so I knew where to apply the glue. I set the book and the cloth wings onto the book covers, then used the foam brush to work glue into the fabric of the wings.

Gluing the spine onto the book - then flip over to dry


ELMER'S
Glue·All
Now Stronger Formula
946 mL (1 Qt) 32 Fl Oz

The next and last step will be gluing the inside yellow card stock to the front and back of the book.

Inside Yellow Covers

I folded and creased each cover first, then pressed down on the crease with the plastic end of a chisel.

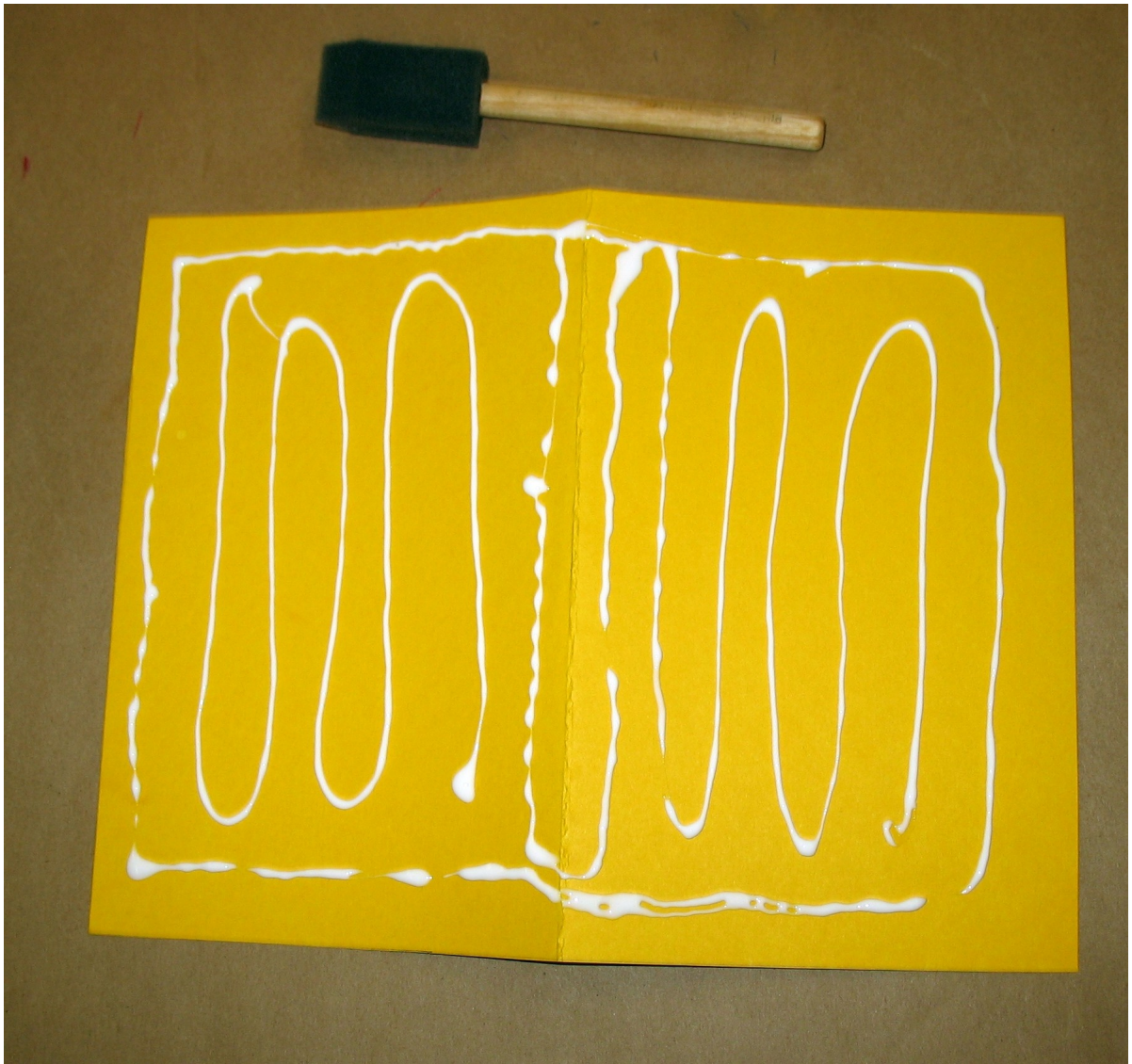
I applied Elmer's glue liberally, then smoothed out with foam brush.

I got 2 new plastic bags. You line the first and last pages of the book, so no glue bleeds through when you are gluing and clamping.

I applied the back inside cover first. I had no problems.

I glued up the front cover, applied it, then looked at both spline ends. I did not have the front cover installed such that it fit closely at 90 degrees to the spline. I carefully removed it without tearing the yellow inside cover, or front paper page of the book...shewww :)

I applied glue again to the yellow card stock, reinstalled it more carefully, while watching the ends of the splines, to get a good 90 degree fit.

I 

clamped it up in the vise to dry.....as shown in the photos above.

Method Comparison

While I was waiting for my book to dry, I made up a comparison chart comparing the 3 methods of bookbinding. As I predicted, my process is a blend of the other two lady's methods…

Comparison of Book Binding Methods

Binder	Instructional Method	Secure pages within Signatures	Secure Signatures to Each Other	Cover Fabric	Inside Cover Liners	Attach Book to Covers	Attach Liner	Cover Thick-ness	Trim Method
Kaptin Scarlet	Illustrations on Instructables web site	stapled	Glue fabric 5x book thickness to spline	Glue to outside of book. Overlap 1" on side and glue.	Yes	Glue fabric to front and back	Crease card stock. Apply glue to liner, press to cover and book.	Anything that works	none
Crafty Loops	YouTube Videos	Sewn with 4 holes and 1 ribbon for small book.	Sewn with fabric wings. Glue card stock on top of signatures. Squeeze book and glue small wings to outside of book	Glue to outside of book. Overlap 1" on side and glue.	Reasonable method not shown	Glue first and last blank pages to covers with no liner.	NA	2 mm or 5/64"	none, Exacto knife
Dale C. Maley	Web page	Sewn with 6 holes and 2 ribbons for small book	Sewn with fabric wings. Glue card stock on top of signatures. Squeeze book and glue small wings to outside of book. Glue fabric 5X book thickness to spine card stock.	Glue to outside of book. Overlap 1.5" on side and glue.	Yes	Glue fabric to front and back covers.	Crease card stock. Apply glue to liner, press to cover and book.	1/16 or 4/64"	Exacto knife on side opposite spline

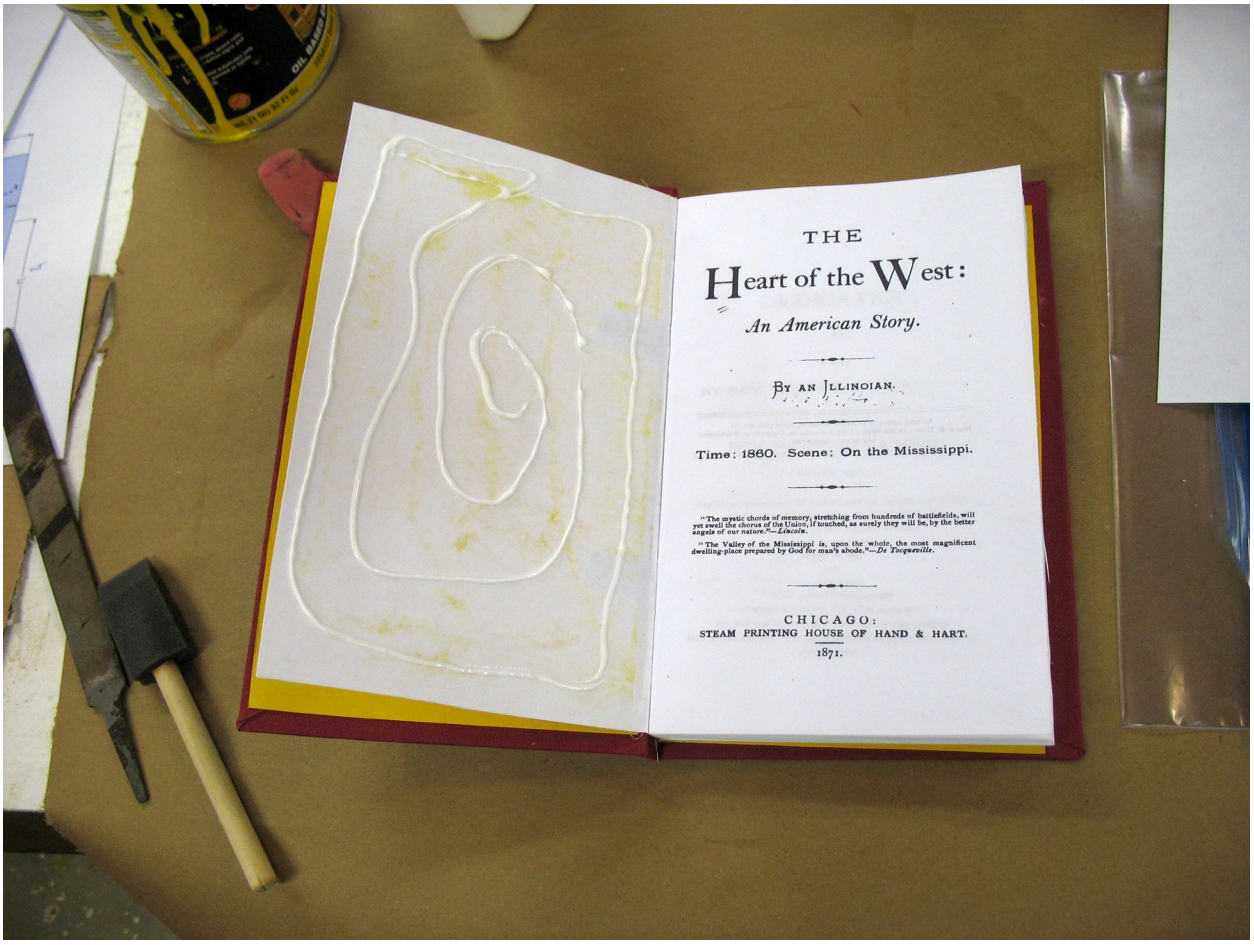
I'm sure the Irish lady has a good method for installing liners in front and back of the book, she just did not show it on her YouTube videos.

Clamping up Finished Book in the Vise for Inside Covers to Dry

Out of the Vise

Everything looked pretty good, except I got some yellow bleed thru from the front yellow page through the first white blank page of the book. I am going to try to glue another sheet of white paper onto it, so you don't see any bleed through. The back white page has no bleed through. The front probably has it because I had to remove it after it was first glued, then re-glue it again.

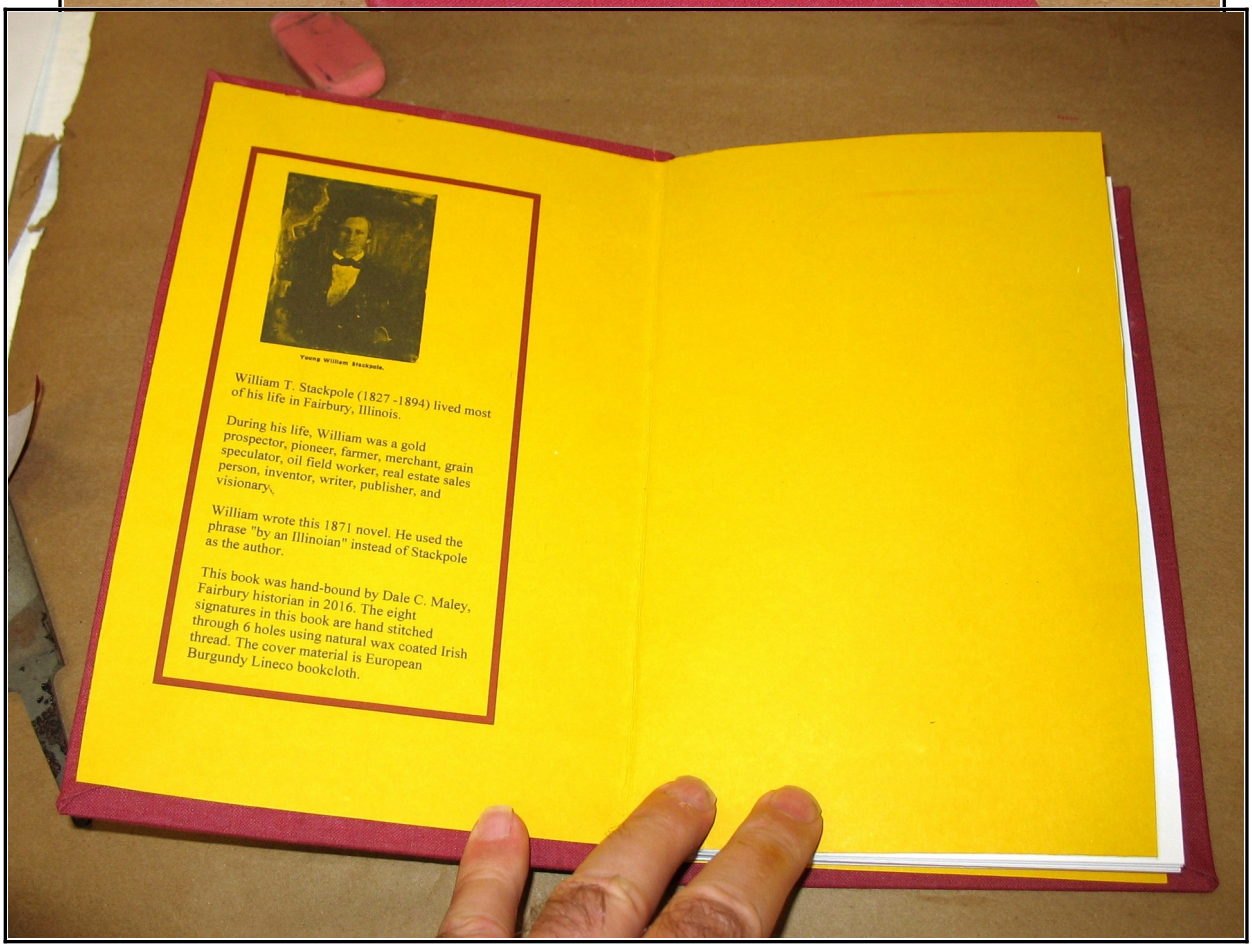
I also don't have a perfect border distance from the outside of the covers to the yellow card stock liners. I was able to trim the white pages fine. I might be able to trim the uneven yellow spots with an Exacto knife. On future books, I should try first gluing the yellow liner to the blank white page of the book, then trim the yellow where it meets the front or back cover.....before gluing it down? [Do in 2 steps versus 1 step]


THE
Heart of the West:
An American Story.
By an Illinoian.
Time: 1860. Scene: On the Mississippi.
"The mystic chords of memory, stretching from hundreds of battlefields, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, if touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."—Lincoln.
"The Valley of the Mississippi is, upon the whole, the most magnificent dwelling-place prepared by God for man's abode."—De Tocqueville.
CHICAGO:
STEAM PRINTING HOUSE OF HAND & HART.
1871.

You can see yellow bleed through. Now ready to glue in a new blank white page to cover up the bleed through.

The photo above shows the yellow bleed-through. I went ahead and glued a new blank white page over the white page with the bleed through.....

Finished Book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During his life, William was a gold prospector, pioneer, farmer, merchant, grain speculator, oil field worker, real estate sales person, inventor, writer, publisher, and visionary.
William wrote this 1871 novel. He used the phrase "by an Illinoian" instead of Stackpole as the author.
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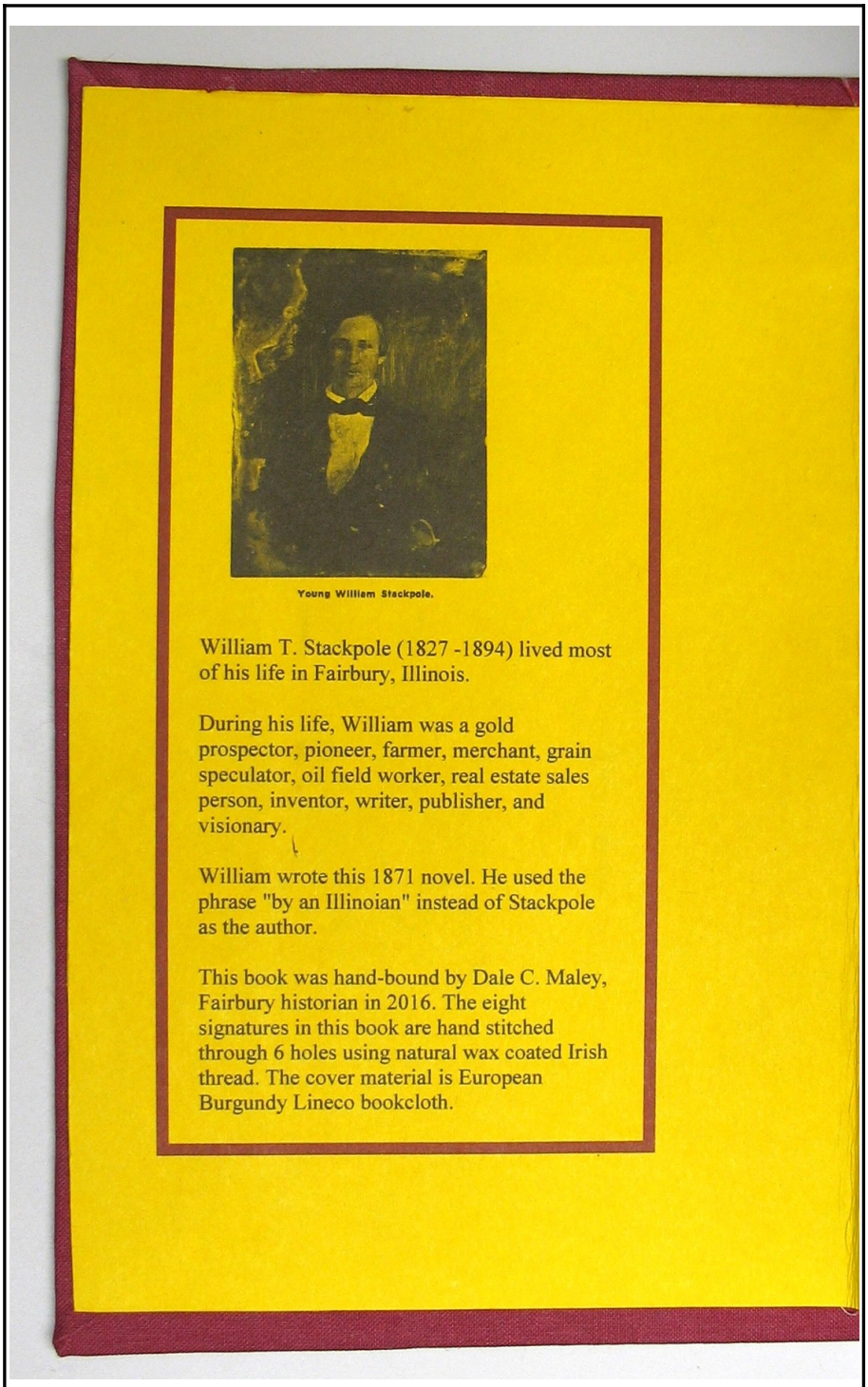

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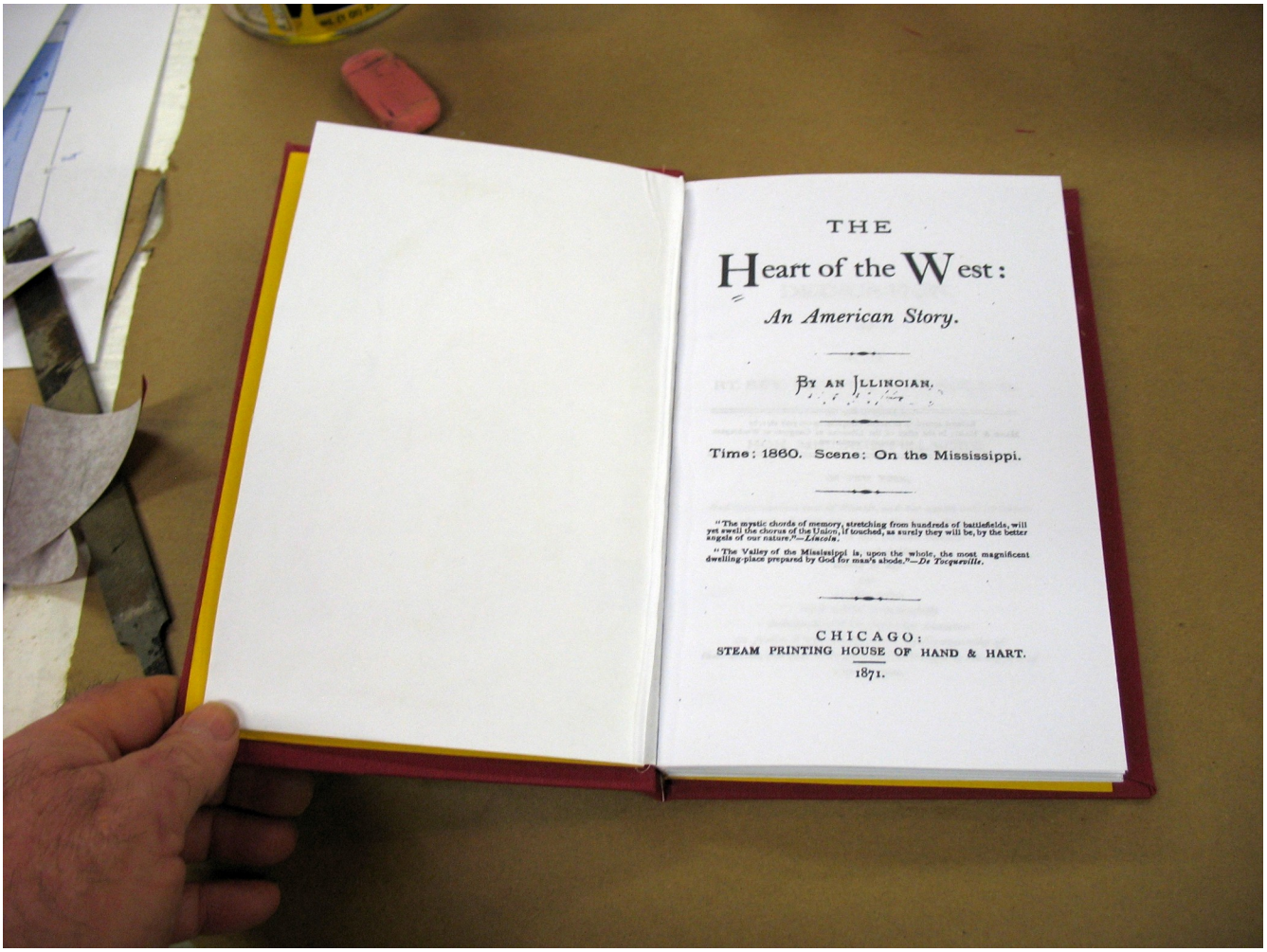
Close-up of inside cover page.



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STEAM PRINTING HOUSE OF HAND & HART.
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Stenciling

I still don't know how to put on a book title on the cloth cover. I got out my very old stencil set, and used a fine black magic marker.....but I am not happy with the results.

The stenciled letters are not crisp enough for me. Looks like I will be leaving this book un-labelled on the covers.

Closing Thoughts

This was a fun project, because I learned many new things. On most Serial Number #1 projects, you often end up throwing away the first unit you make.....In this case, I am pretty happy with the quality of this 1st book. I am sure I will get better after I do more bookbinding projects.

==========

Jan 2017 Follow-Up

The front cover still wants to cup inwards, probably because I had to remove the liner, and then I reglued the 2 pages and re-installed the liner. The double coating of glue is probably causing the cupping. The back cover is nice and straight, like it should be.

I am also convinced the yellow card-stock I used is too heavy for the front and back liner. It makes the book difficult to open and close. I have some thinner paper to try on the next project.

I also think using heavy card-stock to cover the glued bindings does not allow the book to flex enough. You should be able to open the book half-way, lay it down, and it stays open. On the next project, I am going to try cheesecloth instead of heavy card-stock.

October 2017 Follow-up

I left my first hand-bound book under several heavy books in my closet, to see if the bow in the covers would straighten out. I pulled out the book today, and both covers are perfectly flat now. I tried to lay the book 1/2 way open on my office table, but it would not stay open by itself. So, I opened the book about 1/2 way open, then placed it under several heavy books again, to see if this would solve the problem. Done on October 14, 2017.

After a week so, I checked and this improved the ability of the book to stay open. I went ahead and made the book about 1/3 open, and put the weights back on. I think using cheesecloth versus thick cardboard on the spline, will improve the books flexibility.....so it will lay open to a page.

November 2017 Update

When I was researching how to print a dust jacket for a book, I stumbled across an article that said certain printers, including Canon, that use the right type of ink.....you can use your ink-jet printer to print on book cloth. I have some scrap red cover cloth.....I will have to try this out as a possibility for future books.

I ended up donating this hand-bound book to the Fairbury Echoes Museum.

When I do some more books, I should try printing the title on the cover red cloth and see how that works. The inability to put the title on the cover is the only issue I have not solved when making hand-bound books.

September 30, 2025 Update

Unfortunately, both my website and my photo links went bankrupt, but I was able to use the Wayback Machine and retrieve my web pages. I recreated the information in the website and created this document.

Some Lessons Learned if I bind some more books:

1. I think the yellow cardstock I used for the 2 inside covers on the 1st book was too thick, and it makes the book difficult to open and close. Maybe try some thinner weight card stock.
2. I think the cardstock I used for the edge of the spline was also too thick. Maybe try cheesecloth on the next book.
3. Consider a 2 step process for gluing on the 2 inner covers, to get better alignment of the inner cover to the book edges. See above for more.

I never figured out how to print a title on the book cloth cover. Supposedly some printers can print on this paper?? I ended up having a print shop in Bloomington make covers for me.

Dale C. Maley
September 29, 2025